

Division BS 14.15

Section 18.W94

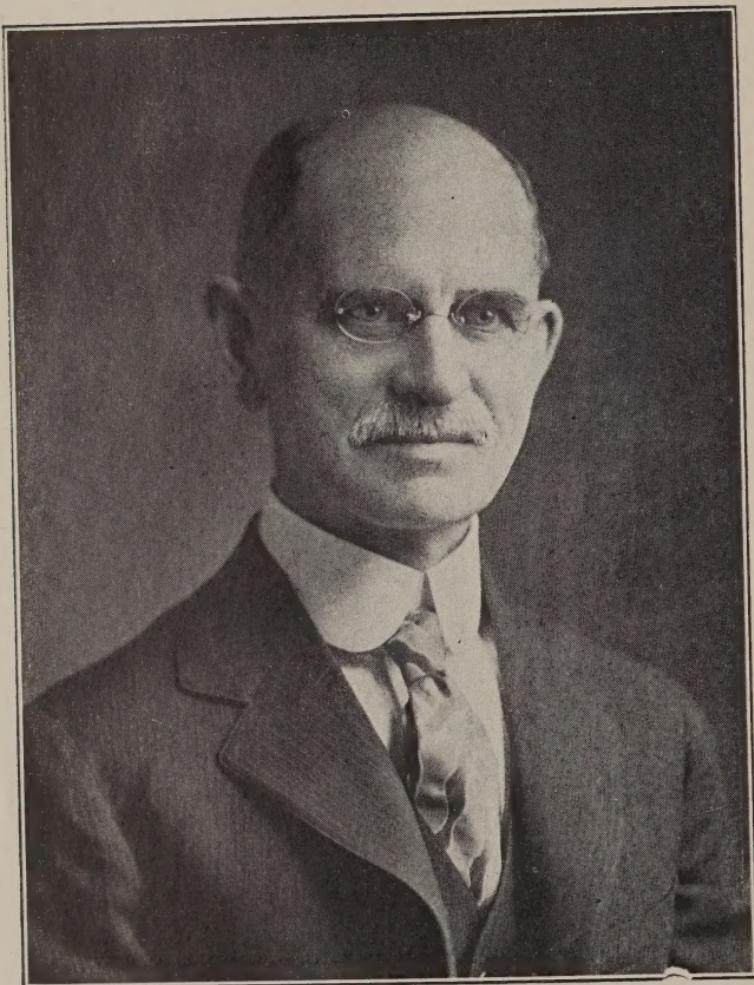












PROFESSOR NEWTON WRAY, D. D.

# *The BOOK OF JOB*

## A BIBLICAL MASTERPIECE

*Interpreted and Explained*

*by*

PROFESSOR NEWTON WRAY, D. D.

*Author of*

“Must the Bible Go”; “Church Fun and Finance — a Twentieth Century Message to the Churches”; “Holiness and the Greek Tongue,” Etc.



**HAMILTON BROS.**

*Publishers*

120 TREMONT STREET

BOSTON, MASS.

Copyright, 1929 by Professor Newton Wray, D. D.

All rights reserved

Made in U. S. A.

TO  
MY WIFE

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### PART I. *The General Discussion.*

		<i>Page</i>
CHAPTER	1. Character, Authorship, and Purpose of the Book.....	6
CHAPTER	2. The Various Tests.....	20
CHAPTER	3. The First Cycle of Speeches in the Debates .....	36
CHAPTER	4. The Second Cycle of Speeches.....	55
CHAPTER	5. The Third Cycle of Speeches.....	63
CHAPTER	6. The Interposition of Elihu.....	76
CHAPTER	7. The Divine Interview with Job.....	86

### PART II. *Special Emphases.*

CHAPTER	8. The Immemorial Cry of the Race....	114
CHAPTER	9. The Sovereignty of God.....	129
CHAPTER	10. The Divine Answer to Human Bewilderment .....	156
CHAPTER	11. The Ministry of Pain.....	172
CHAPTER	12. A Lesson in Sanctification.....	189
CHAPTER	13. Immortality .....	197

## FOREWORD

This volume was born of trial. The author was passing through dense shadows that oppressed him with a sense of mystery and left him no recourse but to search the Word of Divine Inspiration in which light is thrown upon the dark scenes of life and the sense of mystery is relieved by gleams of hope.

It was thus that he was led to give special attention to the book of Job in whose pages were found thoughts and lessons suited to his case, and not to his only but also, he feels sure, to all who need help in the midst of life's trials and perplexities.

This volume, therefore, has been written not for scholars merely, though it is hoped even they may find something worthy of their attention. The author rather has had in view the great mass of people who faint and fall under burdens imposed by circumstances beyond their control. With them may be included the general run of Bible readers and students who should become better acquainted with what our title page describes as a masterpiece of Biblical literature.

It is in this spirit that the volume is submitted to a reading public.

May, 1929.

## PART I

### CHAPTER 1

#### *Character, Authorship and Purpose of the Book*

The literature of the world contains nothing approaching the moral grandeur of this sacred book. Estimates of its worth place it incomparably above anything that has come from the pen of man. Carlyle thus speaks of its excellence:

“Such living likenesses were never since drawn. Sublime sorrow, sublime reconciliation; oldest choral melody, as of the heart of mankind; so soft and great, as the summer midnight, as the world with its seas and stars. There is nothing written, I think, of equal literary merit.”

Professor Richard G. Moulton thinks that if a jury of literary people were selected to decide the question, what is the greatest poem in the world’s great literature, a large majority would give their verdict in favor of this book.

Victor Hugo emphasizes its unparalleled merit with these words: “To-morrow, if all literature was to be destroyed and it was left to me to retain one work only, I should save Job.”

In form, the book has been described as a “dramatic poem, framed in an epic story.” This fact, however, does not determine the question of its nature, concerning which there are the following theories: 1. That the book contains an entirely true history. Rejected by many expositors. 2. That it contains an imaginary narrative designed to teach a great noble truth. Not admissible. 3. That it is founded on a true history which has been recast, modified, and enlarged by the author. Believed by most thinkers.

Against the theory that the book contains an imaginary narrative designed to teach a great moral truth, "it has always seemed to pious writers incompatible with any idea of inspiration to assume that a narrative certainly not allegorical, should be a mere fiction, and irreverent to suppose that the Almighty would be introduced as a speaker in an imaginary colloquy."

Ewald says: "The invention of a history without foundation in facts—the creation of a person, represented as having a real historical existence, out of the mere head of the poet—is a notion so entirely alien to the spirit of all antiquity, that it only began to develop itself gradually in the latest epoch of the literature of any ancient people, and in its complete form belongs only to the most modern times."

To which McClintock and Strong add: "In the canonical books there is not a trace of any such invention. Of all people, the Hebrews were the least likely to mingle the mere creations of imagination with the sacred records reverenced as the peculiar glory of their race."

That Job was not a fictitious character is evident from Ezekiel 14:14 and James 5:10-11,—passages which this theory would divest entirely of good sense. When people are told that though Noah, Daniel, and Job were present they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, or when they are reminded of Job as an example of patience in suffering, the statements would have neither relevancy nor force if these men never lived and the narratives concerning them were pure fiction. There can be no *example* without a *person*, and the Holy Scriptures know nothing of supposition as a vehicle of truth.

Some things indicate that the story belongs to the Patriarchal period. There is no reference to Mosaic legislation; no mention of a sacerdotal order, of a temple or ritual service. The language and illustrations show common ground with the Arabic. As Jerome states the case: "Jobum cum Arabica lingua plurimam habere societatem," (Job has the greatest familiarity with the Arabic language.) The pastoral setting of the poem, with its tents, its wealth in flocks and herds, and all the simple scenery of wilderness life, points to a patriarchal origin. So does Job's age, which must have been not less than two hundred years.

This patriarchal origin seems to be supported also by the fact that the book, up to the test wherein the voice of Jehovah is heard, dwells almost entirely on the justice of God. That side of His character occupies the foreground of debate and is emphasized by all the debaters, including Job. We are thus, in the age of the patriarchs, carried back nearer to the Flood, the most signal visitation of Divine Justice the earth has ever known. It would be natural to find in a book of patriarchal character, with the story of the Flood and that of Babel vivid in the minds of thoughtful men, such emphasis.

Another thing to be noted is that only the patriarchal names for God are used in that same portion of the book. That the redemptive name *Jehovah* occurs in the last section is evidence that this name is then appropriately used as implying that the God for whom Job longed and waited was not merely a just, but a Redeeming God; He unfolds Himself in redemption as the highest manifestation of righteousness, the explanation of His character, hitherto unknown. The

higher critics refer to Exodus 6:3 as a proof of their Documentary theory of the *Pentateuch*, which denies the Mosaic authorship. The verse reads: "And I appeared unto Abraham and unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them." The simple fact is that the word Jehovah was in the language of men, but was not in their understanding until God began to reveal Himself as Israel's redeemer from the land of bondage. Its meaning then became known to men.\* It is certainly very significant that the book of Job anticipated this definition, making prophetic his cry, which was but the voice of humanity uttered in that remote age. And since Moses was called by Jehovah, after his sojourn in the land of patriarchs, to verify that idea, it is probable that he wrote the book.

All the probabilities accord with the Jewish tradition in attributing the authorship of the work to Moses, whose intellect, education, and experience peculiarly fitted him for the task. Emphasis must be laid upon the facilities he enjoyed for acquiring information and for meditation, in the land of Midian, where he would come in contact with Midianitish bards, from whose lips he doubtless got the original story. It is not reasonable to suppose that a man with the mind of Moses would spend forty years in Midian

---

\*The whole question is, however, of comparatively little consequence, for from whatever quarter Moses may have received the name, it was only the name that he took; its connotation is due to him. All depends on what Moses made of this God, whom he may have adopted from somewhere, or, more accurately, what conception of the Deity he gained through this God."

The Religion of the People of Israel, by Rudolph Kittel, University of Leipzig, p. 65.

doing nothing but tending the flocks of his father-in-law. Amid the solitary wastes of that land and in the shadows of towering mountains, as he watched these flocks, he must have thought profoundly upon the great themes of God and man.

The Arabs have a saying "Do not go into the desert if you would not meet God." Nothing can exceed the power of an illimitable expanse to create a sense of awe and disclose to man his littleness. Stanley in the fearful solitude of the African forests felt the presence of God and wrote on his flag, "God is before us and He will show us the way." Lieutenant Shackleton, on his return from the Antarctic to England, said that in that vast and perilous solitude he had no doubt that Providence guided them and it seemed to him very often that they were not three but four. "I said nothing to my companions on the point, but afterwards Worsley said to me, 'Boss, I had a curious feeling on the march that there was another Person with us.'" In his "Adventures in Contentment" David Grayson remarks: "No man becomes a great writer unless he possesses a highly developed sense of mystery, of wonder. A great writer is never *blasé*; everything to him happened not longer ago than this forenoon." Time is nothing when one senses the eternal Presence. A modern writer has said: "One is not likely to see God unless he is a lover of large and silent spaces." Maeterlinck observes: "It is in the silence of nature that great things are fashioned." And Professor A. N. Whitehead, in "Religion in the Making" has the pregnant remark: "Religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness. If you are never solitary, you are never religious." A cobbler who lived in a little, cramped

room was asked if he did not feel imprisoned in that little place. "Oh, no," he replied, "I just open the door" (which opened toward the sea). "When I open that door and look out over that great sea, I can come back to my boots again."

All great souls have felt the truth thus illustrated. They were oppressed by the sense of narrow limitations that obscured their vision of God and duty. They needed a change of scenery, a consciousness of right relation to God and His claims which dwelling with Him apart would bring, in order to effective living and serving.\*

Such was the need and the experience of the great emancipator of his people, whose life before and during his sojourn in Midian was a providential preparation for his mission.

Could any one be imagined as so well fitted to write the overpowering descriptions in this book as one who was reared amid the splendors of Egyptian civilization but who in the grandeur of his solitude had learned how vain were all those splendors compared with the greatness of God and the well-being of man? A comparison between certain passages in Job and other writings of Moses will help to answer this question: Job 7:1-10 and 14: 1-6, 20, with Psa. 90: 3-7; also 31: 26-27 with Deut. 4:19; 12:23 and 15:19 with Deut. 32:8.

---

\*We do not have enough inwardness, we are not sufficiently pre-occupied with our own spiritual life, we lack quietness; and this not only because in our exacting, busy existence it is difficult to obtain, but because ignoring its importance, we do not take pains to secure it, being too easily contented with living our lives as unrecalled men who merely aim at being good.—Albert Schweitzer, *Christianity and the Religions of the World*, p. 56.

Furthermore, we cannot doubt that Moses during this long period of waiting brooded upon the oppression of his people in Egypt, and that the problem of reconciling the sufferings of God's children with Divine Justice must have arisen in his mind. The story of the patriarch of Uz coming to his knowledge would afford him the fitting opportunity to develop his thoughts on this subject.

Attention may now be called to certain remarks of Judah Lev Ben Lev whose introduction to the book of Job was translated from the Hebrew by the scholarly editor of the notable work on that book by Hermann Hedwig Bernard who for twenty-seven years was Hebrew teacher in the University of Cambridge. Ben Lev is referred to as "one of the most eminent Hebraists that ever lived." Regarding the leading character of the book, this eminent Hebraist says he was evidently "a pious and upright man" who lived "before Moses, much more before the giving of the Law." As to the authorship of the book, he mentions the lack of agreement among "the sages of the Talmud" and continues:

"But, if we appeal to wisdom, and address intelligence, and also listen to our own feelings, they all bear witness to, and declare, the early origin of this book, and that it is ancient of days; and in those early days there was not found a man more proper and fit to write a book so precious as this, than Moses, the man of God, and this book is quite worthy to be attributed to him."

Yet, because of "the great mixture of Arabic words which have found their way into, and been interwoven in, the poetry of the book" showing "that the book was not composed in the purity of the Hebrew tongue," he

ventures the opinion "that the real (i.e., the original) book was written in the Arabian language, or in the Aramaean language, which is kindred to it, and that it was Moses who translated this book into the Hebrew language with a master's hand, for he only and no other could have guided his hands so skilfully as to preserve the poetry which was poured out from one language to another, so that its taste should not become insipid nor its scent evaporate; and perchance it (the poetry) may be even more pure and more sublime than the real book. And so skilfully did he compose his poetry that it is impossible to detect that it is a translation."

Passing from the question of authorship to that of purpose, we can see that the latter does not depend upon the former. No matter who wrote the book, its purpose remains to be considered on its own merits. There are two possible views:

1. That the book is an attempt to solve the mystery of suffering.
2. That it is an answer to the question, Is there such a thing as disinterested piety; in a word, that it sets forth a test of character. There is the mystery and also the question. But which is *main* and which is *incidental*? The answer, I believe, is furnished by a certain principle thus stated by Benjamin Wills Newton: "I find in scripture a principle of interpretation which if conscientiously adopted, will serve as an unfailing guide as to the mind of God as contained therein. *The first mention of a thing, the very first words of any subject of which the Holy Spirit is going to treat, are the keystone of the whole matter.*"

According to this principle it will be seen that the purpose of the book is to prove the second proposition. In the first verse we are introduced to Job as a man that "was perfect and upright and one that feared God and eschewed evil." And the Lord calls special attention to that fact, when "Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for naught?" (1:9). This is the key-verse. Satan avers that Job's piety is due to his prosperity and challenges God to take away this "and he will renounce Thee to Thy face" (1:10-11). God accepts the challenge and gives Satan permission to destroy everything Job has. This test having failed, Satan proposes another which likewise vindicates God's estimate of His servant. Other tests fail to shake the integrity of Job, who, however, profits by them and attains a higher type of religious experience.

The main purpose, then, is to show the reality of disinterested piety, and thus establish the moral perfection of God. The testing of true character is inevitable; i.e. the Divine plan. To this the problem of suffering is incidental. The former is the end; the latter, the means. The exposition will accord with this purpose.

Job's circumstances might well be described by the term that defines his piety. They were *perfect* in their adaptation to satisfy, humanly speaking, both mind and heart. His family, his wealth, and his honors were all that could be desired. Yet these things often tend to carnalize the religious spirit. Something more was needed; and that something Job had. His piety was sincere and fervent as evidenced by his habits and by the Lord's own statement.

Notwithstanding such proof, the question of his piety was raised by one who is described as *the Adversary*. 1:6-11, *margin*.

It is quite generally thought that the personage referred to was the Devil, who is known by various names in the Scriptures, according to the trait or form of activity in any statement concerning him. The term Satan, as noted in the margin, has the definite article in the Hebrew, and should be rendered *the Adversary*. So far the definition befits the situation, for the Devil is the adversary of the saints. The difficulty is in making him appear before God with the holy angels. Yet the scene in 1 Kings 22:19-23 implies such a possibility unless the passage can be interpreted psychologically otherwise. In the book of Revelation Satan, there called "the accuser of the brethren," is said to be cast down from heaven where he "accused them before our God day and night." The presence of God has no special confinement. Satan intrudes himself into the assembly of the saints where God and angels are (see Matt. 18:20 and 1 Cor. 11:10) and his temptations occur in the sphere of the mind.

There is another explanation advanced by Professor Richard G. Moulton, which avoids the difficulty above mentioned. Satan's answer to the Lord's question (1:7) is identical with the description of those mysterious beings in the vision of the prophet Zechariah who was told, "These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth"—spirits of ministration of God on earth. For this reason Professor Moulton believes that the word Satan ("the Adversary") is "the title of an office, not the name of an individual" and signifies "that he is the adversary of the saints in

the same way that an inspector or examiner may be considered as adverse to those he inspects or examines. He appears on the scene among the sons of God; and there is nothing to distinguish his reception from the reception of the rest. As other sons of God may have one or another of the 'morning stars' in their guardianship, so the Adversary is the Guardian Spirit of earth."

Some things apparently favor this view. There seems to be no evidence of malignity on the part of the Adversary. The Almighty does not condemn this treatment of His servant, but gives permission for its infliction. Moreover the language of Job throughout the book takes it for granted that his adversary is God, and the impression is nowhere corrected. See, for example, chap. 7:12-21; 9:11-35; 10; 12:9; 13:15; 19:6-13, 21-22; 31:35-37. It is God's own challenge regarding the character of His servant and therefore permissively the test of that character is Divine. Now Job was ignorant of the colloquy between God and Satan and did not feel that his sufferings were the direct result of Satan's work; for he recognized the sovereignty and providence of God in his life. He believed, as stated in Isa. 45:7 and Amos 3:6, that the Lord is the author of natural evil, sin alone being attributed to men as accounting for the evil.

Here, however, arises the principle laid down in determining the purpose of the book,—that the author in his Prologue proposes to show that God is not served by the faithful because of His benefits, but because He is such a Being that they would cleave to Him at any cost. In suggesting certain tests of Job's piety, therefore, this Adversary is really attacking the character of God as incapable of making Himself loved

without pampering His creatures, thus evincing His own imperfection. Such a serious implication could only come from the Devil whose malignant attitude toward God and man is everywhere shown in the Scriptures. This is the view of Godet who holds that the attack is "aimed primarily at the honor of God," in whom Satan "has discovered the vulnerable point;" for "he knows perfectly well that the most telling blow he can inflict upon it is to deny that God is ever disinterestedly served and sincerely loved by any being whatsoever." "The being who is unable to excite an emotion of disinterested love, were he the most powerful of all beings is nevertheless the neediest and the most humiliated. The most telling blow, therefore, which can be inflicted upon the Divine honor, is to assert that even the most devout worshipper of God upon earth only serves Him with this *arrière-pensée*: 'what shall I gain by it?' If it be so, God is nothing more than a potenate flattered by cowards; He has no friends, no children, nothing but mercenaries and slaves. The lamp of God's glory dies in this impure breath; the Seraphim must change their hymn and say, 'Heaven and earth are empty of thy glory.'"

As to Satan's reason for thus disparaging the Almighty, no explanation is vouchsafed by Holy Writ and we can only surmise. Did his primeval rebellion in heaven have to do with the thought that God had not made a perfect universe which he (Satan) could have improved upon? Did he think his capabilities were not adequately recognized, and that his glorious personality was entitled to a higher place in the scale of being?

---

\*Godet's "Studies on the Old Testament" p. 200

Did the thought lead to the desire to challenge the supremacy of God and assert for himself what could not be his by creation? Such a procedure would seem to be probable from St. James's explanation of the origin of sin (James I: 14-15).

At all events, this was not the only time an intelligent creature has found fault with the Divine order because his circumstances were not according to his liking. In all such cases the creature's attitude is a denial of the Creator's wisdom and love. This, indeed, was the very feeling to which Job, in the severity of his trials, nearly succumbed.

The object of Job's trial, then, is to prove that Satan's charge is false; that there is such a thing as disinterested piety—the devotion of souls that love God for what He is, infinite in all the excellencies of His Being. The remainder of the book, wrote Godet again, "can only serve one purpose,—to remove the false ideas, the dangerous misconceptions, the rash judgments upon the Divine government, which may spring up in the minds of men when they have to witness facts of this kind without possessing the key to the mystery of them."

Having thus set forth the purpose of the book, I will only add, that the value of the book as a study in character does not depend upon the question of the Adversary's identity. It is the story of a perfect man on trial, and we are to consider the various tests he underwent.

Two of these tests which were the direct work of Satan were the indirect cause of the others. The suffering produced by that work led to his wife's rebellion, the provoking attitude of his three friends, the

interposition of Elihu, and the intervention of the Lord whose searching word humbled him and ended the prolonged trial.

*Questions*

1. What bearing has the estimate of great men on the value of a book?
2. Are we warranted in holding that the book of Job is not mere fiction?
3. What proof is there of its patriarchal origin and Mosaic authorship?
4. State the view-points concerning the purpose of the author of the book and why one rather than the other should gain credence.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE TESTS

#### *The First Three Tests*

The first test was domestic bereavement and the loss of his property. The second test was a loathsome disease which made it difficult for his own wife to endure his presence (17: 6). The first test involved his circumstances, the second, his person. In both the element of restraint in the divine permission is strongly suggested. The adversary could do nothing without that permission and he could not go the slightest margin beyond it. This is one of the most precious lessons in the book. The hand of God is upon every circumstance in the life of His children. Other reflections upon this point will be found further on.

The third test was the attitude of his wife regarding his trials. These trials were, she felt, undeserved. Believing in her husband's moral integrity, she considered the dealings of Providence cruel and unjust, and said to him, "Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity? renounce God and die." *Rev. Ver.* It was a striking proof that Job's life had been consistent with his profession. But while wifely devotion was thus evinced, there was also manifest a want of confidence in God that intensified the affliction of the suffering man. Nothing is more painful to a God-fearing man than to see this want in those he loves.

The severity of these tests is impressively set forth. In his agony and desolation, Job recalls the happy days "when God watched over him" and "the candle of the Lord shone upon his head" and he "walked through

darkness by His light"; "when the secret of God was upon his tent; when the Almighty was yet with him and his children were about him; when his steps were washed with butter, and the rock poured him out rivers of oil"; and when all classes did him honor, the great for his wisdom, and the poor and needy for his help. (Chap. 29). But in the midst of all his wealth and honor, and while his domestic and social happiness was at its height, calamity struck him like the blast of doom. His property was swept away, his home rent with the anguish of death, his body filled with noisome disease and his name cast out as evil; so that life became to him an intolerable burden.

Under such conditions a selfish piety would have given way. But this man, though stunned by the sudden reversal of his circumstances and overwhelmed with sorrow, "sinned not nor charged God with foolishness." Falling down upon the ground, he "worshipped" and gave utterance to that sublime sentiment which has been to millions of souls the expression of true resignation: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!"

Even when Mrs. Job protested against the way he was dealt with and bade him "renounce God," he did not falter in his faith. "Thou speakest," he told her, "as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?" In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

What, then, are we to make of his *curse* and his *prayer for death*? Were they, at this stage of his suffering, indicative of a change of feeling toward God? I think not. We discern in these pathetic utterances the outbreaking of unparalleled misery and the cry of

a soul completely bewildered by the apparent purposelessness of its existence. This was the first mystery suggested by Job's suffering.\* "Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul . . . . Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?" There was no answer to such questions, and Job had yet to learn the lesson of quiet submission where no explanation was vouchsafed. How far one may lawfully go in bewailing his condition will depend upon the degree of his enlightenment. Weakness does not necessarily mean sin in the sight of Him who "knoweth our frame, and remembereh that we are dust." Prayer for death is not the highest conception of what is due from a sufferer, but it may seem to be the best thing in his situation; and so long as he leaves the issue with God, he cannot be said to reflect upon the wisdom, justice, or love of God. It is the man who, to escape suffering, takes his own life, that commits a grievous sin, since the Author of life alone may recall what He has given. The suicide denies the Divine prerogative and seeks freedom from responsibility — a vain and criminal course of action.

There is an English story of a Yorkshire man who contemplated suicide as a way out of his trouble. He took up his gun for this purpose when the thought of his folly arrested him. "There's sumat in me more than a dog," he exclaimed; "I'll live and see the game through!" He kicked the gun away and faced again

\*Compare the curses of Jeremiah (Jer. 20:14-18) whose great soul was torn with anguish over the apostasy of his country and its impending destruction. His testimony, like Job's, was rejected with scorn, and his name cast out as evil. Why, he says, should he have been born to that shame? How many of the great and good of earth, "of whom the world was not worthy," have known such days!

the realities of life. This is the right spirit,—to “see the game through.”

It cannot be said that Job at first rose to this point of view. But never did he think of ending his misery by suicide. Even the vivid language of Chap. 7:14-16 only expresses a preference. The inference from all his statements is that though he felt his birth was a misfortune and his life in suffering a useless thing, he yet regarded that life as belonging to God who alone had the right to say when it should end. While praying “that it would please God to cut him off,” he maintained that he had not declined from His ways and he looked with confidence for vindication from the unjust aspersions of his friends. Did he wish for death merely as a release from suffering? The story intimates that his removal from earth would be preliminary to the vindication he expected. His trial had shattered the old theory that piety would surely have its reward in this life, and therefore his hope was in the future, after being hidden for a time in Sheol. (14:13-15; 19:25-27).

### ***The Fourth Test: The Contention of Three Friends***

To understand the force of this test, consider the character of these friends,—Eliphaz the *Traditionalist*, Bildad, the *Philosopher*, and Zophar, the *Bigot*. It is very difficult for such men to see the other side of a question, and they are apt to be harsh and intolerant. They become stereotyped, enslaved by their methods, and incapable of appreciating new conditions or seeing a new light.

The speeches of these strange friends are made up of reproaches against Job, reiterations of the same

charge, fallacious reasoning in support of it, and betray, as the afflicted man declares, the lack of true friendship (6:14-30; 12:4-5; 16:2-5; 19:21-22). To one conscious of his purity nothing can exceed the cruelty of assuming his guilt. Yet Job is not thrown into a state of doubt and revenge by such misrepresentation, and out of this terrible situation he alone rises to faith's firm ground.

The theory of Job's friends is this: Job has sinned, for all suffering is a punishment for sin. Putting the argument in the form of a syllogism will reveal the fallacy.

All suffering is a punishment for sin;  
Job is suffering;  
Job is punished for sin.

The fallacy lies in the major premise of which the book is a powerful refutation. The friends support each other in the contention and interchange of arguments, such as *tradition*, *the infinity of God*, *the insignificance of man*, etc. Nevertheless a distinctive note may be detected in the addresses of each.

*Eliphaz is the champion of tradition.* He emphasizes it. 4:5; 5:1; 15:17-19; 22:15-17. In his first speech he hints rather than charges Job with sin and fore-stalls any attempt at self-justification by means of a vision he had had and the intimation that Job's calamity is the natural effect of sin. He suggests that hope lies in penitence and submission to the Almighty, and closes with the dogmatic statement, "Lo, this, we have searched it, so it is; hear it, and know thou it for thy good."

In his second speech (chap. 15) Eliphaz charges that Job's sin is aggravated by casting off fear and restraining prayer; asserts that his defense proves his iniquity; satirizes his assumption of knowledge; hints that he is perverse; repeats a former proposition that self-justification is impossible and claims that the traditional view is a better guide than his rant.

In his third speech (chap. 22) he accuses Job specifically of various sins (of which he has no evidence whatever), and of presuming on immunity from punishment because of divine nescience, plays upon Job's statement in Chap. 21:14-16, and reiterates the traditional idea (V. 15-20). His conclusion is an exhortation to repentance and implies that the question of Job's guilt is settled.

*Bildad supports the traditional view by philosophical argument drawn from nature.* First, by the law of cause and effect (chap. 8:11-19) confirmed by the certainty that God will not cast away a perfect man, nor help evil-doers. Second, by the statement that Job cannot be an exception to universal law (chap. 18:4), expanded by a description of what always happens to the wicked (Id. 5-21). Third, by contrasting the greatness, power and holiness of God with the abjectness of man (chap. 25). This argument is pure assumption, taking something for granted.

*Zophar, the bigot, full of zeal for the received notion, attacks Job without mercy, charging him with lies, mocking, self-righteousness, and presumption, and says that he is suffering less than his iniquity deserves (ch. 11:2-6). Let Job cease trying to fathom the Infinite God and repent of his wickedness, and all shall be well (11:7-20). In his second speech,*

Zophar merely and by implication accuses Job of various crimes and states the consequences (ch. 20).

To all accusations and arguments Job opposes the most solemn, explicit, and comprehensive denial. Again and again does he fling back the charge of sinning, proclaims his innocence in language that makes him seem to his accusers the very embodiment of hypocrisy and rebellion, (6:10 R.V., 28-30; 12:4; 13:15; 16:15-19; 23:11-12; 27:4-6), and closes his discussion with an oath of clearing from every form of wickedness, and with the wish that the Almighty would answer him and he were furnished with the written indictment of his adversary (chap. 31).

He does more. He points out the error of those who seek to convict him of wrongdoing, showing that though it is God who has "overthrown him" (19:6; 27:2), he is being dealt with under a different principle from that universally believed; since it is evident that piety does not exempt from suffering and that the wicked often sin with impunity. (9:20-24; 12:6; 21:7-15; Chap. 24).

It is such anomalies that fill him with confusion and lead to his bold expostulations with God (chaps. 7 and 10; 13:23-28). Yet amid the darkness and the pain he maintains his integrity and waits for God to vindicate him, confessing his faith in a future life and a living Redeemer (13:15; 14:14-15; 19:25-27).

The contrast between the thinking processes of the friends and those of Job cannot be overlooked in any just apprehension of their respective positions. The speeches of the former are almost unrelieved by original and helpful suggestions. In a great crisis for which

none of the ordinary modes of thought are relevant or adequate, they can do no more than repeat truisms which Job states even more forcefully than they do. "How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?" he said. But they could not find the right words for his case. Their platitudes tried him to the breaking point, and he once turned on them in irony: "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you! But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you; yea, who knoweth not such things as these?"

But nothing deep can come out of careless lives; a truth hinted by Job's reflection upon the superficial treatment of his case, in the words: "In the thought of him that is at ease there is contempt for misfortune. It is ready for them whose foot slippeth" (12:5 R. V.). It is only out of the depths of some great agony where lonely wrestlings have wrought emancipation from the vanities of sense that the soul ascends to the place of spiritual comprehension. "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters,—these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep" (Psa. 107:23-24). And that is the reason for the ministry of pain.

So it is Job who brings us, out of the treasury of his pain, a *doctrine* more consoling than the traditionalist's, a *philosophy* more satisfying than the philosopher's, a *wisdom* more enlightening than the bigot's.

Struggling with problems that have baffled the learning of the ages, unaided by a Revelation, in a trial of such magnitude and severity that his conduct under it has placed him in sacred history as the example of patience for all men, this wonderful man has furnished

by the story of his life, the germs of most, if not all, the great truths fully taught in the New Testament.

#### THE FIFTH TEST: THE INTERPOSITION OF ELIHU

In this division of the book we meet with a change of thought. It has been held that Elihu is to be regarded in the same class with the three friends whose dogmatism so tried Job, and that Job refuses to speak further, simply because he is disgusted with all of them and considers it useless to do so. The fact that in the sequel God condemns the three friends, but does not mention Elihu and that the Divine intervention takes up his final thought (36:22-23 Ch. 37) and continues it at length would show that Job's silence was due to another cause—that he feels Elihu has struck a new chord to which, at last, his soul vibrates.

An attempt to disparage Elihu refers to his speech as inferior in style and content, thus evincing a later hand. The speech is characterized as pompous and diffuse, repetitious, with a long, tiresome and vain-glorious introduction. Says Buttenwieser: "What Elihu presents with such assurance and finality, as drawn from hitherto unexplored depths of wisdom, is but a shallow restatement of the orthodox view of suffering which the friends have defended with incomparably greater skill and effect." (The Book of Job p. 85).

This position cannot be verified, in view of all the reasons set forth in this volume, which establishes the logical and spiritual consistency of the poem in all its parts and the order in which the procession of events moves. And if Elihu's quotations from Job are more exact than those of the friends, it is no sign of pedantry, but rather the requirement of his part as

mediator who would not do the thing Job feared—lay upon him “a heavy hand.”

What, then, is the argument of this young man, whose respect for his elders made him at first so diffident. The key is found in the opening statement (32:2-3) : Elihu was angry with Job “because he justified himself rather than God,” and with his three friends “because they had found no answer and yet had condemned Job.” Job had said, “How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth only falsehood?” (21:34). Elihu will state the true position; he will supply the missing factor that brings the solution of the case, viz: That suffering is not necessarily *penal*, but may be disciplinary, to warn, teach, and impart self-knowledge and humility. It should be regarded as preventive, corrective, anticipating the commission of sin, to keep man back from pride and sinful purpose, and to prepare him for greater things.

This in substance is Barnard’s explanation. In his Prologue to Elihu’s speech he affirms that afflictions may be sent upon a good man “to prevent him from becoming degenerate,” and that such afflictions “are no punishment but a salutary warning, a finger of God to point out to him that he is in danger of falling.” In a paraphrase of Elihu’s speech, Job is told that God knew “that the seed of corruption was beginning to germinate in thy heart, that from being pious, upright and a fearer of God, thou wast—unaware of it thyself—about to become the very contrary, and therefore, desiring to save thee, to rescue thee from ruin and perdition, He sent afflictions upon thee.”—*Exposition of the Book of Job.* pp. 291-295.

In general, the idea is correct; but in this particular case, as stated by Barnard, it hardly accords with the purpose of the book. There is no hint in the opening colloquy that Job was about to become degenerate. On the contrary, he is cited as "perfect and upright," etc. But the test of character was required, as already set forth. It showed the deeper need of Job's nature, for a treatment of which see the chapter on "A Lesson in Sanctification."

Elihu proceeds to justify God and to show that God is not, as Job seems to imply, impassive concerning man's suffering and sin, but that the wisdom and justice of God are made available to men who need the discipline. He proves that God is righteous and turns that righteousness to the account of man. It is the New Testament anticipated. God deals with men that they may be brought to accept His redemption (XXXIII).

Job's cry for a mediator (9:32-35; 16:17) seems to be answered in Elihu's description of that office (chap. 33), which is prophetically foreshadowed in the person of Elihu, since in this and subsequent chapters he speaks for both God and man. To him Job listens with the silence of submission. Thus he confesses his mistake. He had complained that his Adversary had "multiplied his wounds without cause" (9:17). He now sees there was a cause, notwithstanding his sincerity.

#### THE FINAL TEST: DIVINE INTERVENTION—THE WORD OF GOD

This is the revelation for which Job had longed, but when it came, his boasting was gone and he was speech-

less. The word of the Lord tried him, and, in the white light of its revealment, he confesses that he was "of small account" and exclaims, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes" (40:4-5; 42:5-6).

What was that Word? For the most part a vivid contrast between the limitations of Job and the infinity of God. The greatness and power of God are so portrayed that Job feels his unworthiness and lies in the dust of humility. Elihu's message had made Job receptive, but the Word of the Lord threw him on his face in humiliation and confession. He saw, in the illumination of that Word, that God's greatness is only the frame of His goodness, that His power is beneficent as well as righteous and should be trusted even when not understood.

Nowhere is there a more striking picture of the tenderness and lavishness of the Divine Providence. It is an exhibition of Divine spontaneity in which the Author of nature seems almost to be in a frolicsome mood, rioting in the activities of benevolent power. Instead of "an Exactor," pictured by Job, we perceive "a liberal Giver." Instead of "infinite inaccessibility," there is infinite sympathy. We see Almighty girded to beneficent ends. With a majesty that awes is mingled a sympathy that melts and subdues.

In the story of the draught of fishes we have an illustration of this same conjunction of grace and power in the ministry of God. The disciples had toiled all night and caught nothing. Nevertheless, at the Master's command they launched out into the deep and let down the nets. The multitude of fishes inclosed

was so great that the boats were in danger of sinking with the draught. "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord!'" Infinite power controlled and directed by a benevolence that knew no bounds overwhelmed the apostle with a sense of his sinfulness in such a presence.

It is not without the deepest meaning that when God took Job in hand, it was as Jehovah, his Redeemer. For it was in that name that God permitted the adversary to test him (chs. 1-2), implying that, however tried by Satan His people may be, it is as Redeemer God guards them, not suffering them "to be tempted above what they are able to bear, but with the temptation also making a way for their escape." And a wonderful escape it was in Job's case.

Only once does Job utter the name Jehovah, in chapter 2, and then three times to express his resignation. In such an attitude of mind the redeeming name is appropriate. But how came he to employ it? His wife, in her rebellion, tells him to "renounce God." She felt that the Creator was to blame. Job answers her, according to her idea, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?" When, however, he voices his submission, it is in words that stress the aspect of God's nature which deals with the Power of evil and sanctifies every event to the believer's good. Evidently the Divine Spirit guided in the choice of the name in the colloquy between Jehovah and Satan and in Job's reaction to the result of that colloquy.

Then, as only the ideas of righteousness, justice and power, which attach to the Creator as Ruler of the

world are present in the cycles of speeches, such terms as involve these ideas are used.

Only twice does the name Lord (Jehovah) appear elsewhere—12:9 and 28:28. But these passages doubtless imply that the God “in whose hand is the soul of every living thing and the breath of all mankind” (12:10) and who hides Himself in the mystery of suffering, is the covenanting, redeeming One foreshadowed in the personifications of wisdom and revealed in the New Testament as “Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God.” As such He is to be reverenced and served even when things tend to create doubt of His justice. Elihu does not use the name Jehovah, because he reasons on the basis they occupy in common and looks forward to the Being whose name suggests the ransom he mentioned. When that Being, following Elihu, speaks, it is as One whose benevolence is no less evident than His power.

It was the realization of this truth that led the Psalmist to say: “God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God. Also, unto Thee, O Jehovah, belongeth mercy; for Thou renderest to every man according to his work” (Psa. 62:11-12).

In like manner Job, listening to the Voice out of the whirlwind, felt that the power belonging unto God was not blind and aimless, but somehow operative to intelligent and gracious ends. And, in the mystery of his suffering, he saw what Professor Moulton has suggested as one of the solutions of this mystery, that “the whole universe is an unfathomed mystery, and the Evil in it is not more mysterious than the Good and the Great.”

So, he learns his lesson; his wild expostulations at the dispensations of Providence are hushed; and taking the attitude of holy submission to a Will he cannot comprehend, he realizes what Madam Guyon wrote, "Ah, if you knew what peace there is in an *accepted sorrow!*"

In the epilogue, the Lord is seen rebuking the three friends for their unjust declamation and commanding them to sue for mercy in the presence of Job who "shall pray for you; for him will I accept; lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right like my servant Job." Job, as Godet says, "receives from the mouth of God a striking declaration of His satisfaction because, amidst all the exaggerations which have escaped him, he has himself always spoken *sincerely*. A heterodoxy which is frank and true-hearted finds more favor in the sight of God than a strict and cold orthodoxy."

The significant statement is added that the Lord "turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends," and "blessed his latter end more than his beginning."

Thus was Elihu's prediction fulfilled: "Even so would He have removed thee out of the strait into a broad place where there is no straitness and that which is set on thy table should be full of fatness" (36:16).

Such is the barest outline of this wonderful book, a careful study of which shows how rich it is in suggestions of truth.

### QUESTIONS

*The first three tests:* 1. Which of the three tests, think you, was the most severe?

2. What are we to make of Job's curse and his prayer for death?

3. What great prophet voiced his complaint in a similar way, and what made them resolve to endure rather than end all by suicide?

*The fourth test:* 1. Describe the character of Job's three friends and their contention in common, with its fallacy.

2. Point out the distinctive note of each.

3. How does Job resist the reasoning of these friends?

*The fifth test:* 1. What change of thought have we in this test?

2. How, therefore, must we regard the position of Elihu as between the friends and the Divine interview with Job?

*The final test:* 1. How would we characterize this intervention today, in the settlement of theological issues?

2. Why is a different name for the Divine Being employed in this part of the book?

3. Why does not Elihu, in view of his position, make use of it?

4. And how are we to account for its use in chaps. 1 and 2 and only twice elsewhere (chaps. 12:9 and 28:28)?

5. What is the main thought in the Divine interview? Illustrate from the New Testament.

## CHAPTER 3

### *The First Cycle of Speeches in the Debate: Chapters IV — XIV*

#### THE DISPUTANTS.

“Now when Job’s three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came everyone from his own place: Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come down to mourn with him and to comfort him. And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him; for they saw that his grief was very great.” (3:11-13).

In these simple yet thrilling words the men who are to reason with Job about his case are introduced. Their appearance and demeanor do not at first becloud their title of “friends.” Their sincerity is manifest. Their motive,—to mourn with Job and to comfort him, is praiseworthy. Their astonishment at his changed condition and their tears and other signs of grief, indicate a deep feeling of commiseration, while their long, tactful silence evinces a thoughtful and tender regard for his feelings. Someone has said, “you cannot show a greater want of tact than in attempting to console a person by making light of his grief.” Job’s friends cannot be charged with this folly. “None spake a word unto him; for they saw that his grief was very great.”

The silence of Job's friends was more comforting than their reasoning, which only aggravated the affliction. Words may be like a probe to the wound, when silence would knit the torn edges of grief. It is the personal presence more than what is spoken that ministers comfort.

Unfortunately for Job's friends, they broke their silence by disclosing certain reserved preconceptions that made them incapable of fairly judging his case. They were sincere but mistaken men. Their sincerity is thrown into clear relief by the intensity of their feeling as to what they regarded an established principle of righteousness. Not even the pitiable plight of Job, —“among the ashes,” covered with a frightful disease and broken-hearted, could induce them to remain quiet when that principle was denied. When Job cursed the day of his birth, lamenting his useless existence and questioning the wisdom of life under such circumstances, they felt that his outburst was not the kind of expression his trouble should have caused. And the way he closed this depreciation of his birth and life, was calculated to unseal their lips and release a flood of argument. Job said: “For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet, yet trouble came.” To men with their preconceptions such a statement could only mean that Job's conscience had been uneasy about something whose retributive result was the very thing he feared; in a word, that there was sin in his life, entailing this suffering; and this indeed was their position. Of course, Job's fear could have been accounted for in a way consistent with the consciousness of innocence, which he asserted (see 31:23), but that would

have destroyed their theory. They were in the dark, as Job himself was, about the fact of suffering.

In taking up the debate of these men with Job, let it be borne in mind that they were all traditionalists, each bringing his quota of reasoning to the support of the doctrine, until then universally held, but destined to be shattered by the teaching of this book. Even Job may have been more or less inclined to the hard theory before it was dissolved in the fire of his experience. There was no arguing against his own consciousness in the matter, and so the logic of events compelled a recast of his premises, that the fact of his suffering might not contradict the testimony of his conscience. In his darkness he was unable to do this; hence the climax of the book, wherein One greater than Job and his traditionalist friends dispersed the cloud and let the light stream in.

#### ELIPHAZ: IV-V

I can only give the briefest synopsis of this discussion, and shall begin, of course, with Eliphaz, a traditionalist *par excellence*, supporting the theory by an appeal to *experience*, as derived from observation, vision, and consensus of opinion. Nothing could exceed the tact and gentleness with which he addresses the sufferer, from a sense of duty. The argument follows.

Job is reminded of his past benefactions and of his present state of mind, and is questioned concerning his confidence and hope. "Is not thy fear of God thy confidence, and thy hope the integrity of thy way?" (4:6 R. V.). There is a hint that Job had secretly sinned, but that his confidence in God's justice shows he may escape by penitence.

The accepted principle of sin and retribution is stated interrogatively, and positively, observation showing that the wicked can no more escape God's destroying blow than the strongest beast.

Self-justification impossible, *as a vision* made plain to him. The substance of this vision could have happened to any serious person thinking on the question of man's relation to God. Job faced the same question without a vision. Eliphaz mistook the application. He meant to forestall any attempt on Job's part to justify himself, implying from the message he received at night that such an attempt would be a virtual claim to be more just than God and would be futile. There is only one way out, he thinks, confession, as all the saints affirm.

Further examples from *observation*. (5:3-5, etc.). This is the fallacy of insufficient premise. All cases are not included. Job is an exception.

*Not a matter of chance.* Affliction (*iniquity-margin*) and trouble do not just happen so, although trouble (*labor or sorrow*—Heb.) is natural to this world.

States what he would do if he were Job, since recourse to a Being like God, whose beneficence and power are engaged for the safety of the poor and the overthrow of the mighty, would not be in vain.

Urges Job to receive the chastening of the Almighty and describes the blessedness that would follow doing so.

The experience of Eliphaz calls for a little further attention, by way of safeguarding truth. It may have

been purely subjective, due to an overwrought condition of his mind. He speaks of "thoughts from the visions of the night" and of "shaking with fear". Then a spirit passed before his face and stood still, but he could not discern any form; an image was before his eyes and he heard a voice.

Now if there were any reality in this vision (or dream) it would not apply to the case of Job, since the use Eliphaz makes of it,—to force a confession of guilt from an innocent man, is repudiated by God, in the final outcome. Dreams and visions are misleading when interpreted in the interest of error; and they are false, if contradicted by facts.

Nothing is more essential than testing experience by an objective standard of reality. When God has spoken concerning a matter, that is decisive for all the issues involved. His word must be the court of appeal for all thoughts, impressions, and views.

In this connection may be cited a case occurring in the mission in Solomon Islands, as told by Northcote Deck, M. D., the missionary. He says there was great difficulty in regard to the cause and origin of sickness. One of the faithful native teachers, fervent in faith yet very limited in knowledge, on beginning mission work in the islands, "laid down the law for his district that all sickness is the result of, and punishment for, previous sin, which must therefore be publicly confessed before the sickness may abate. Thus was initiated a ceremony called 'rofela' or 'the searching' in which (instead of a man examining himself after the apostolic precept), the sick man was examined by a number of the Christians and exhorted to confess his sin."

Job's friends had their "rofelaa", but as he had nothing to confess, they did not succeed in their "searching" as did those natives, among whom "sins unsuspected before were brought to light," partly because of which the Christians continued the practice in spite of the missionary's advice. Much prayer was made that the practice might be checked before it spread to other districts, the missionary seeking to show how one-sided a view of the truth it caused. Says Dr. Deck: "I remember once the dear old man who was its author saying to me: 'Yes, Doctor, I know all about Job and about Paul's thorn in the flesh. But only one thing I know, God showed me this thing for myself. When I came to the islands to preach I never had the chance to learn very well. I did not read the Bible well like many teachers now. So God showed me this truth for myself. He taught it to me, and now this is the law for this place.' So, unconsciously, the dear man was claiming a higher revelation than the inspired Word of God, a thing which has been the starting point for many false views of truth."

And he could not have been a better exponent of the error Job had to contend with, if his name had been *Eliphaz*. Experience must accord with sound doctrine or it cannot be relied upon as a guide in religion. A divine objective standard of truth is the only preventive of religious error. This a sufficient answer to the specious argument that disparages doctrine in stressing experience. There can be no real Christian experience apart from Christian doctrine.

#### JOB: VI-VII

The intensity of his grief has made his "words rash"; confesses that God is dealing with him but that there

is just cause for his outcry. They, with no sense of want, are like animals whose hunger is stilled by grass and fodder, while pain has destroyed his desire for food; the inference being that they cannot appreciate his condition. (6:1-7).

Prays for death, yet is consoled by his conscious integrity. Since God has afflicted him, He alone can comfort, and death is the only means (8-10).

How little Job knew of God's resources of comfort! He says that no purpose would be served by his continuing to live in his condition and that he is at his wits' end. He does not suspect God might heal him. But how noble his testimony: "And be it still my consolation, yea, let me exult in pain that spareth not, that I have not denied the words of the Holy One!" (verse 10—Revised Version).

His condition makes his life useless and should excite pity, even though he forsake the fear of the Almighty, but these friends are like evanescent streams that fail when they are most needed to refresh. (11-21). He never sought favor of them; hence their counsel is gratuitous. (22-23).

Enlighten me, he says, and I will listen! Make me to understand wherein I have erred. He demands something more than assertions which are no help to a desperate man, but which indicate a mercenary spirit. "Yea, ye would cast lots upon the fatherless and make merchandise of your friend."—(Revised Version, 24-27). Is this a hint that Job questions the motive of these men?

Stresses his veracity and the righteousness of his cause, and declares he has not lost his power of spiritual discernment (28-30).

His sufferings and the transitoriness of life are the justification for his complaint, and a reason for considerate treatment from his friends, (7:1-16).

He expostulates with God whose watchful presence aggravates his misery and seems incommensurate with man's importance. Ah, when Job came to know God better, no truth was so consoling as that presence! In his perplexity, he says that *if* he has sinned (Rev. Version), he does not know what to do to the Watcher of men and cannot understand why he has been made "a mark", so that he is a burden to himself, and why his sin is not taken away. This is an appeal for light on the problem of his suffering (7:17-21). This will come after God has been glorified by His servant's endurance. "For ye have need of patience" runs the apostle's admonition, "that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

#### BILDAD: VIII

The Shuhite has no courteous introduction to his remarks, like Eliphaz, who was preparing the way for this discussion. From his point of view as a philosopher, there is no use wasting words on a man whose first utterances were so provoking. His argument, as might be expected from his way of thinking, was brief, dealing with general principles:

#### JOB'S VIOLENT LANGUAGE A REFLECTION ON DIVINE JUSTICE

*The case stated hypothetically, on the basis of Tradition:* "If Job's children sinned and were destroyed for their iniquity, that would not establish his innocence, since "the fathers" are agreed that a man's

suffering is not due to another's but to his own sin. The modern phrase, "every tub must stand on its own bottom", is Bildad's idea. But even so, Job may turn to God in prayer and *repentance* (such I take to be the meaning of, "if thou wert pure and upright"—if thou sincerely make things right) and be restored; "the habitation of his righteousness would be made prosperous."

There is no doctrine of grace in this law theory: "Do and thou shalt live". Job alone, in reply to Bildad hints at how the doctrine could arise (9:32-35).

*Tradition supported by the law of cause and effect* (11-22). Nature teaches there is no growth without proper conditions,—"mire", "water", depth of earth. These failing for any cause, vegetation withers. Personal righteousness, a cause; divine favor (prosperity) the effect. When a man sins, and his righteousness is gone and with it the favor of God, etc. Let Job get right again. "God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will He help the evil doers," etc.

### JOB: IX-X

Bildad's philosophical reflection on *cause and effect* and his statement that "God will not cast away a perfect (just) man" intensified, in the mind of Job, the perplexity that was the deepest element in his suffering. In his prosperity he had rested in the notion that the favor of God was the reward of his righteousness, though 3:25-26 seems to hint that doubts of the popular view had arisen, perhaps from the exceptions he had observed and now notes (9:22-24), but how can one tell what is righteousness before God, since his only evidence—the approval of his conscience, avails no

more as a guide? He assents to Bildad's reflection, but knows the cause in his case cannot be sin without contradicting the fundamental law of his being,—the consciousness of his integrity. Yet here is an effect: *suffering; why?* Somehow the problem of *being just before God* is involved, whose solution by man is impossible for reasons, thus epitomized:

1. The greatness and sovereignty of God make Him irresistible and incomprehensible.

2. Job will not undertake the impossible. He would supplicate his judge (adversary—Rev. Ver.); but he would not believe his call was really heeded because this treatment of him, from the point of view then prevailing, was “without cause”.

So, Bildad cannot apply his law of cause and effect to this case.

3. The next thought strikes at the very heart of this mystery before which Bildad's philosophy can only chatter meaningless formulas. Here Job voices his conviction of the need of a revelation. He says man cannot solve the mystery, because there is with him no means of *personal adjustment to the Almighty*.

(a) *There is no basis of equality for making the attempt.* (9:19-32).

His conscious innocence would not help him (9:20-21). (The *Revised Version* must be followed throughout as more accurate).

He could not plead a difference between “the perfect and the wicked”, since the same providences befall both (22-24). This was a distinct affirmation that *piety does not exempt from suffering.*

His life too evanescent (25-26), contrasted with the Eternal God.

All his efforts to be self-forgetful and pure would be vain. Condemnation inevitable in view of what he is undergoing and there is no assurance that the process will not be repeated (27-31). "I still am afraid," he says, "of all my sorrows (returning) for I know that Thou wilt not (by removing my sufferings) hold me innocent." Could anything more forcefully suggest the central truth of the atonement? Suppose God should remove the sufferings by an act of sovereignty, apart from any method of establishing justice, leaving man to his natural way, the question of harmony with Him would remain unanswered. Mercy without righteousness would not satisfy the ethical demands of our being, and would imperil the moral interests of the universe. Only by a plan that would secure both could man realize union with God and feel assured that all is well. But this was a solution possible, as Job suspects, only through a mediator. As the case stands, there is no parity of persons, and hence no adjustment of relations.

(b) *And no mediator.* "For He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer Him, that we should come together in judgment. There is no daysman betwixt us, that might lay His hand upon us both," etc. (32-35).

4. Job expostulates (chap. 10) with God *concerning his case*. "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" said the prophet Isaiah. Job seems to feel that way and turns from philosophy to God. He will give free course to his complaint; he will ask God not to condemn him, and to explain. His expostulation contains the following points (chap. X):

He is God's workmanship and the object of providential care. Has God man's limitations that He tries to find something wrong with His own work? appeals to God's knowledge of his integrity; and declares that "all God's dealings with him, in his creation, preservation, and present affliction were part of His secret counsel" (3-13); asserts that whether wicked or righteous, he stands no chance, seeing one blow after another falls upon him; cannot see why he was born and begs to be let alone his few remaining days before he enters the land of darkness (14-22).

It was well for Job that he was not let alone; that God, who saw the end from the beginning, reserved him for a marked vindication and a glorious change of fortune.

#### ZOPHAR: XI

A bigot is one who is obstinately and blindly devoted to a particular creed, opinion, practice, or ritual. In short, an intolerant dogmatist. He may be thoroughly sincere, without a grain of charity for those of different belief and practice, or of patience with their convictions. The intensity of his feelings leads him to question, if not to asperse, the motives of others who deny his assertions. His opinions are more apt to be an inheritance of the past than the result of intelligent and independent thinking. He cannot sympathize with those who struggle toward the light—the type that led Tennyson to write of his friend, Arthur Hallam:—

"Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,  
At last he beat his music out.

There lives more faith in honest doubt,  
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd strength,  
He would not make his judgment blind,  
He faced the spectres of the mind  
And laid them: thus he came at length  
To find a stronger faith his own;  
And Power was with him in the night,  
Which makes the darkness and the light,  
And dwells not in the light alone,  
But in the darkness and the cloud,  
As over Sinai's peaks of old,  
While Israel made their gods of gold,  
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud."

Thus it was with Job who found at last "a stronger faith his own," when the Power that was "with him in the night" unveiled itself to his honest soul. Not so with Zophar the bigot who, unable to appreciate the struggle of such a soul, could not tolerate a man with its protestations and denials. He does not reason; he denounces. He brings forward nothing that he has assimilated by the processes of personal dealing with truth and error; he merely stands for what everybody believes. As for Job's profession of innocence, it deserves worse than he is getting. He charges Job with vain talk, lies, and mockery. "But Oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee; and that He would show thee the secrets of wisdom, that are double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth."

Little did he imagine that when God would open His lips, it would not be against Job, but against him and his friends, and that Job would be shown to be nearer "the secrets of wisdom" than they were.

The only suggestion Zophar makes, beyond the stereotyped note that suffering is penal and Job would find relief by repentance, is the presumption of trying to "find out God"—a thing which Job had already expressed far better than Zophar was capable of doing.

### **JOB: XII-XIV**

A careful study of this reply will furnish the following outline:

*Job answers the dogmatist according to his folly, but directs his observations to the company.* He indulges in sarcasm against their pretended wisdom, declaring he is as competent as his critics; complains that he is made a laughing stock by them and that their ease makes them insensible to the suffering of others and void of pity (1-5).

*Repeats the fact stated in reply to Bildad (9:24) that God blesses the wicked with prosperity, and cites natural history in proof.*

All life is in God's hand, yet He gives innocent creatures as prey to the stronger whose nature it is to devour (cf. 39:29-30). The inference is that Job in the jaws of anguish is not thereby proved guilty (6-10).

*Appeals from the wisdom of ancient men to the wisdom of the Ancient of Days.* Aged men may be wise, but God is wiser. "With Him is wisdom and might, counsel and understanding"; yet these attributes are arrayed against the great and strong of earth, reducing them to vanity, making speechless the trusty and taking away the understanding of the Elders. "The deceived and the deceiver are His". He exposes the secrets of earth and both increases and destroys the

nations; spreadeth them abroad and bringeth them in. Under His hand the chiefs of the people lose heart and grope in darkness (12:25).

The purport of all this is that God is a *sovereign*, as Nebuchadnezzar found out, doing "according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?"

*Job has seen and understood all this, which is a matter of common knowledge; but they are "forgers of lies and physicians of no value."* He wishes to be closeted with God, and tells them not to talk, if they would be wise (13:1-5).

Demands they listen to his *reasoning* and *pleading*:

(a) Warns them that God will deal with them for their false and impious reasoning and asks why he should anxiously desire to save his life (7-14).

(b) Expresses the strongest confidence in the Author of his misery (for he goes back of all secondary causes) as well as in the justice of his cause (15-19). "There are various modifications of faith; all of which are important in their appropriate places; and all of which, it is quite probable, have a connection more or less intimate with the life of faith. . . . But we cannot doubt that the true life of God in the soul must be sustained in a very considerable degree, by means of that specific form of faith *which recognizes God as present, not only in every moment of time, but as present, either permissively or causatively, in every event that takes place.*"—Thomas C. Upham, *Principles of the Interior or Hidden Life*, p. 88.

Was there ever a more sublime expression of faith than this, which even to death will wait for its vindicator and at the same time insist upon its integrity?—"Though He slay me yet will I wait for Him. Nevertheless I will maintain my ways before Him. This also shall be my salvation; for the godless man shall not come before Him." The godless man has not, and cannot have, true faith, and has nothing to wait for but destruction. As the Psalmist put it—"The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (psa. 1:4-6; Cf. Job 23:10). On the other hand, the martyr to right enjoys the approval of his conscience and faces the future with unclouded assurance.

The words, "wait for Him," are the correct rendering, agreeing with verse 14 and 19:25-27. Job does not look for vindication in this life, yet he doubts not it will come. "In the harsh face of life faith can read a bracing gospel," said Robert Louis Stevenson, himself a life-long sufferer. He once wrote to a friend: "The inherent tragedy of things works itself out from white to black and black to blacker; and the poor things of a day look ruefully on". Could any language better describe Job's situation than this? Stevenson continues: "Does it shake my cast-iron faith? I cannot say that it does. I believe in the ultimate decency of things; ay, and if I woke in hell, would still believe it."

Such was Job's faith many centuries before the coming of Christ to fulfill the very office he felt was needed. In the darkness of his age, with no light except that afforded by Nature and tradition, he believed in "the ultimate decency of things." He felt—

“I falter where I firmly trod,  
And falling with my weight of cares  
Upon the great world’s altar-stairs  
That slope thro’ darkness up to God.

I stretch lame hands of faith and grope,  
And gather dust and chaff, and call  
To what I feel is Lord of all,  
And faintly trust the larger hope.”

There was this difference between the sufferer of that remote age and Stevenson and Tennyson. They had the light of revelation with its glorious gospel of assurance; he had his intuition of what God must be and his conscious fidelity to duty (cf. Rom. 2:14-15). Yet he is not a whit behind them in his expression of faith. The problem of sin and suffering belongs to all ages. It will cease to trouble only at the final unveiling of God.

c. However, Job’s sole relief is in speech, only he prays God may enable him to speak by meeting him on some other level than that of majesty and power. Here the need of a Mediator is again suggested (20-22).

d. Asks to know what his sins are and why God’s face is hidden and why he is treated so severely (23-28).

e. Adverts to the common misery of mankind. The frailty of men and the brevity of his life having been determined by the Almighty furnishes a plea for exemption from suffering. (14:1-6). The mystery of pain had yet to be solved. Even a tree has an advantage over man in respect to the present order of things. For that being cut down will spring up again; but “man dieth . . . and riseth not, till the heavens be no more,

they shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep." (7:12). To hold that this denies a future state of existence does violence to the undercurrent of Job's thought. Surely he never believed that the being of a man was inferior to that of a tree! that a fallen tree would spring up again, but a man never would; that waters might fail and the flood dry up, and never be renewed! But that his temporal existence might be cut short with no return to its present state, causing him to look for better conditions beyond the grave, is the clear implication of the whole context. The affirmation in 19:10 confirms this implication. So, also, does the argument on *Immortality*, chap. 13 of this volume. Note particularly pp. 199-206, 209 of that chapter.

Here then was the climax to his demand for a hearing. With no hope of being revived in the present world, he expects a glorious change hereafter and prays that God would hide him in *Sheol* until he should be called forth. God will then remember his sins no more as they are "sealed up" in eternal oblivion (Cf. 9:7). Concludes with emphasizing the certainty of man's mortality and dissolution (13-22). In these words again recurs the thought that death does not end all for man. God prevails against him (in death) and sends him away;\* but he has only passed on; he is sent away, till recalled by One who "will have a desire to the work of His hands." *He knows nothing that hap-*

\*Edwin Markham, the poet, when asked what he thought was the greatest line of poetry ever written, said: "I think it is that verse in Job about God writing the life history of every man upon his face—'Thou changest his countenance and sendest him away.'"

pens on earth after he is gone (21). This verse, as well as the twenty-first of chapter ten, and the twenty-first of chapter twenty-one, are proof against the teaching of spiritism. "The dead know not anything" nor "have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done *under the sun.*" (Ecc. 9:5-6). The italicized words show the reference is to the earth.

#### *Questions*

1. To what does Eliphaz appeal in support of the traditional view?
2. What illustration from a mission field shows the error of such an appeal and what is the only corrective of over-emphasis upon the subjective aspect of religion?
3. State Bildad's argument in favor of the traditional view.
4. How does Job's answer show the necessity of the atonement?
5. What is the point to Job's exostulation that he is God's workmanship, etc.?
6. What use does Job make of natural history in reply to Bildad and Zophar? (See 9:26; 12:6-8).
7. What is the answer to the denial of a future state of existence which has been got out of Job's reference to human frailty and the brevity of life as compared with the phenomena of tree and flood?

CHAPTER 4  
SECOND CYCLE XV—XXI  
ELIPHAZ: XV

Satirizes Job's claim to wisdom; charges him with irreverence and prayerlessness, and asserts that his defence proves his guilt (1-6).

Retorts against Job's claim to equal knowledge with them, that they know as much as he does (and so one assertion offsets another; but what is Job's authority?); that wisdom neither began nor ended with him; and that all the authorities are against him (7-10). Verse ten is a striking reminder that Job is but a novice to question such a time-honored doctrine.

Thinks Job carried away in rebellion, and hints he must be winking at some evil, seeing "the consolations of God seem too small" for him and "the word that dealeth gently" does not affect him. Stronger language is therefore needed for his case. (11-13 *Revised Version*).

Reiterates his former proposition in 4:17-19 that self-justification is impossible (14-16).

Sets forth the traditional doctrine that suffering is a punishment for sin and that though the wicked man may temporarily strengthen himself against the Almighty, yet he shall not prolong his substance upon the earth, and warns Job not to deceive himself (17-35).

Eliphaz asserts that the wise men got this doctrine from "the fathers unto whom alone the earth was given and no strangers passed among them." But

tenwieser thinks this implied "that the foreigners living in the country, obviously in no mean numbers, are responsible for Job's heresy," and so points to 400 B. C. as the approximate date of the book "before the whole of Syria was in open revolt against Persia." (*The Book of Job*, p. 78).

The assumption is that the book is a post-exilic product, which cannot be admitted since the golden era of Jewish history had past, and there was no genius in that period of decadence with the training and culture of a Moses to write such a masterpiece. The language of Eliphaz simply means that the tradition held by Job's generation was very ancient, and was applicable to the "land of Uz," as to any country before the homogeneous character of its people was changed by immigration. As we might speak of certain traditions of our own Republic, handed down before the tide of immigration set in.

#### JOB: XVI-XVII

Job reproaches for vain words his so-called friends, whom he styles "miserable comforters," and mentions a striking contrast, if their situations were reversed (1-6).

He complains that his Adversary has made desolate his company, and caused him to look like a wreck; that He watches him narrowly; has given him into the hands of the wicked and overwhelms him "like a giant" (7-14).

But he maintains his innocence and the purity of his prayer, declares the witness to this is on high, and longs for an intercessor while he remains below (15-22).

Truly the good man lacked nothing to complete his misery (17:1-12): without comrades, the friends who came to comfort ignorant of the elementary principles of friendship and reproaching him with false accusations; stripped of every means of vindication, his beneficent achievements forgotten or misconstrued; his unselfish purposes, described as "the possessions of his heart"—dearest treasures of a soul seeking only to do good—"broken off"; his own household estranged; misunderstood, distrusted and dishonored by everybody; tortured by pain; darkness covering the face of his God who acts like "an enemy"; not a single person to pray for him; fighting his battle alone;—was there ever such an example of trial among the sons of men? "Waters of a full cup were wrung out" to him. And it has always seemed to me that the bitterest ingredient in that cup of loneliness and anguish was the fact that he had no intercessor. The feeling that someone was praying for them has cheered and fortified unnumbered souls in far away places of duty and trial. The loss of such support is more grievously felt than anything else. At the death of Robert Murray McCheyne, noted for his spirit and habit of prayer, it was said: "Perhaps the heaviest blow to his brethren, his people, and the land, is the loss of his intercession." But even when earthly friends are few or forgetful, the truth conveyed by the Gospel has imbued the lonely soul with superhuman power. O, the immeasurable consolation of those words that forever meet the need felt so bitterly by Job—"We have an Advocate with the Father" who "is able to save unto the uttermost those that come unto God by Him seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them!" This comfort Job did not have; yet—

He appeals in his extremity from men who are without understanding to the very Being who he thinks has made him an object of contempt, declaring, in the most positive terms, that the future is with the righteous. Asks these men to return, as he finds not a wise man among them.

His hope is in death. (Chap. 17:13-16; Cf. 14:13-15; 19:25-27).

A couple of sentences from Theodore Dreiser's description of the agony of defeat might serve as an illustration of the contrast between Job's former and later experience: "The man who sits in a seat of the mighty and observes a world that is ruled by a superior power, a superior force of which he by some miraculous generosity of fate has been chosen apparently as a glittering instrument, has no conception of the feeling of the man who, cast out of his dignities and emoluments, sits in the dark places of the world among the ashes of his splendor and meditates upon the glory of his by-gone days. There is a pathos here which passes the conception of the average man."

But there was in Job's reflection upon his golden days a compensation never realized by those whose times of prosperity were spent in ease and self-indulgence—a reflection which his friends could not understand or appreciate.

#### BILDAD: XVIII

Has no patience with Job who indulges in words and impotent fury; for —

Job cannot be an exception to universal law (V. 4); therefore, the old view of sin and retribution is insisted upon.

Like men of this type, confining themselves to some great principle, Bildad is brief. A man of few words he doesn't believe in wasting time, when he stands on Law. Nothing else to him is to the point. The trouble with him is, *restricting the application of law*.

### JOB: XIX

But Job has a grip on something more essential to this discussion than natural law. What we see in nature is not a safe index to what may occur in grace. So he protests against the vexatious course of his friends (1:3) and insists (4-22) :

That if he has erred, his error remains with himself.

That God is the Author (permissively) of his affliction, the bitterest elements of which are the silence of God and the conduct of his kinsfolk and friends, whose pity should be excited by his condition.

And he rises to a sublime and climacteric expression of faith in a living Redeemer who shall stand at last upon *the earth* (dust)—the Daysman he longed for—and he shall see God as an acquaintance. (*Heb.*—“I shall see *for me*”; i.e. as *mine, on my side*, “and not a stranger,” not as a stranger. V. 23-27).

Counsels and warns them for their good. “If ye say, How we will persecute him! Seeing that the root of the matter is found in me”; etc. Yes, the root of the matter was in Job, not in his mistaken friends.

### ZOPHAR: XX

Zophar's mind had been busy with his old thoughts and his heart was straining at its leash (“even by

reason of my haste that is in me"—*Rev. Ver.*) He has heard the reproof which putteth him to shame and the spirit of his understanding answereth him. But his understanding is very limited, by reason of his narrow creed.

States again the immemorial view, with some amplification. The allusions are quite personal. Zophar evidently has in mind the very things that had come upon Job. Note the subtle reference (V. 20) to Job's confession in Chapter 3:25-26.

### **JOB: XXI**

Bids them listen to him; he is not complaining to man, and there is no reason why he should not be grieved (1-6).

Proceeds to show where their fallacy lies (7-33). They assume, in proof of their thesis on suffering as a penalty for sin, that prosperity is the accompaniment of righteousness; whereas, he says, the wicked often prosper. The wicked disown God as having anything to do with their success; what is He that they should serve Him? they would gain nothing by prayer. But God shows them how helpless and dependent they are. So Job reasons: "Their prosperity is not in their hands"; they are not the authors of it; it is God's beneficence (Cf. 22:18—*Eliphaz*, who agrees with Job here). Yet God gives an object lesson in dealing with the wicked, as it pleases Him. If they say, "God layeth up the punishment of iniquity for the wicked man's children," he replies, let Him recompense it unto the man himself that he may know it. For what pleasure has he in his house that survives him; he cannot then realize what the house is suffer-

ing. (Another hint that the dead know not what goes on with people on earth). No one can teach God knowledge—tell Him when and how He should deal with men. He is a sovereign and judges those that are high in His own time and manner. There is a seeming inequality in this matter, but all men at last come to a common end.

Job evidently distinguishes between *natural* and *moral* evil. As for the former the wicked seem no more subject to it than the righteous. Laying up (punishment for) iniquity, for one's children, doesn't explain exemption of the evil-doer himself from punishment in this life. And the friends cannot by this sort of fiction put over their theory that Job was suffering because of his sin.

And in answer to the vain question, "Where is the house of the prince, and where is the tent wherein the wicked dwelt?" let it be remembered that their time of judgment is in a day appointed for that purpose, described as "the day of wraths"; i.e. the present life is not the time for adjusting the inequalities of men.

So they seek in vain to comfort; seeing there remains in their answers only falsehood. Job anticipates the day explicitly named in the New Testament: Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 2:5-6.

## QUESTIONS

1. Does Eliphaz offer anything new in the second round of speeches?
2. What can be said in reply to the implication that his statement concerning the absence of foreigners in that country points to a post-exilic date for the book of Job?
3. What gleams of hope are seen in Job's reply?
4. What would you say was Job's deepest sense of misery as voiced by his complaint in chaps. 16-17?
5. What special emphasis does Bildad's insistence in this cycle contain, and where is the fallacy?
6. What is the significance of Job's characteristic expression of faith in Chap. 19?
7. What in this chapter favors Capital Punishment and for what reason?
8. State the point to Zophar's personal allusion in Chap. 20.
9. How does Job in Chap. 21 vindicate his position against the arguments of his friends?

## CHAPTER 5

### THE THIRD CYCLE: XXII—XXX

#### ELIPHAZ: XXII

Does Job think making himself righteous will commend him to God? (2-4).

He is accused of sin, specific instances being mentioned, and of presuming on immunity from punishment because of divine nescience (5-14).

Eliphaz plays upon his words in 21:7-16, asking if he will keep the old way which wicked men have trod, though for awhile prosperous, and exhorts him to repentance in words that cannot be excelled, when applied to sinners (15-30). There is no better way of describing a sound conversion and its attendant blessings, though some modification needed as to temporal prosperity to which the Old Testament gave special emphasis.

#### JOB: XXIII-XXIV

Laments that his complaint is counted rebellion, that his stroke is heavier than his groaning, and longs to appear before God, confident of His mercy. (23:1-7).

Though he cannot find God by searching, he is sure God knows the way he takes and when his trial is over, he will come forth as gold (8-12). He declares he has been true to God and proclaims the sovereignty of God, who "worketh after the counsel of His own will" (13-17; Cf. Eph. 1:11). He then states a perplexity regarding the concealment of God's purpose to punish

the wicked (24:1): "Why are times (i.e. of punishment) not laid up (appointed) by the Almighty? (Cf. 21:19). And why do not they who know Him see His days?" (i.e. of vengeance). Describes by various instances how they sin with impunity, God "imputing it not for folly," but "giving them to be in security whereon they rest." (*Rev. Ver.*); but His eyes are upon their ways and He makes, in due time, an end of them. Job challenges denial of these facts (2-25). How vivid his description of the methods of those who fear to commit crime in the daytime! They wait for the cover of darkness, to avoid exposure. Vain fancy, since God's eyes are upon their ways and "the darkness and the light are both alike to Him."

### BILDAD: XXV

Bildad's final word is very brief, conformably to his custom. The greatness and holiness of God are contrasted with the insignificance of man, forbidding the idea of justification. As stated in this unqualified way, Bildad's argument, making unrighteousness the accident of mortality and littleness, overthrows the position of himself and two friends that Job would be clean if he had not sinned; that if he would confess and put away iniquity, he would be reckoned righteous, and God would put the seal of prosperity upon his life again. In a word, their position was that unrighteousness was due to actual sin and not to being born of woman.

The argument of Bildad is identical with that of Eliphaz (4:17-19 and 15:14-15) and can be made to harmonize with the position mentioned only by supposing that they are referring to a wrong-doer when

they use the expression "born of woman"; as Eliphaz seems to do in 15:16. To make natural birth and mortality a reason for want of justification would be to hold that no man is or can be justified. Surely this was not their contention. To say they imply the fact of inherited depravity as entailing suffering would be equally fatal to their position, for it would make them believe that everybody should be suffering, whereas, their constant emphasis is upon suffering as the punishment for wrongdoing. If the statement of Job in 14:4 indicates belief in the doctrine of original sin, it has no bearing upon the contention that actual sin has been committed. Job seems to say man is unclean from his birth; why, then, should God expect so much of him and judge him so severely? Yet this may be the result of reflection upon his suffering as not in accordance with the popular theory and as irreconcilable with the justice of God. It cannot be turned against the plain insistence of his friends.

#### JOB: XXVI-XXVIII

Sarcastically alludes to their failure to counsel and help (26:2-4). He is fully impressed with the greatness of God and enlarges (5-14), as he has done before (Cf. reply to B's first speech, 9:1-14, 28-32; note similarity of these replies), upon Bildad's suggestion.

But they do not argue to the point. He does not deny that the wicked are punished. On the contrary, he emphasizes it (27:7-23) as he does the thought of God's greatness (chap. 26). Since they know this, why do they harp on the one string that is irrelevant to his case. He will no more justify them than he will renounce his integrity. And he avers by the living God who has made his soul bitter that he will stick to the

truth and keep a clear conscience, "so long as he lives" (27:2-6). They do not reflect that God's time of judgment for the hypocrite may be after this life ("when God taketh away his soul"); that he has no hope; his prayer will not be heard; nor will he delight in the Almighty and have the spirit of prayer (Cf. 22:26-27); whereas (such is the implication), Job prays and confidently expects vindication; he is not in that class (7-10). "I will teach you," he says, "concerning the hand of God; that which is with the Almighty will I not conceal." The root of the matter is in him; but they do not consider, they are altogether vain (11-12). Cf. 21:27-34 and 24:22-25.

The sum of the matter (XXVIII) is that although man searches out the secrets of nature and makes the earth tributary to his welfare (1-11), he cannot thus acquire the wisdom that perceives nor the understanding that knows God, who Himself discloses the secret: "And unto man He said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding." (12-28).

With this magnificent picture of man's genius and skill and yet of his impotence to attain the wisdom revealed by God, the colloquy of Job and the three friends practically ends.

I desire now, to animadvert upon Professor Moulton's re-arrangement of these chapters, which appears to me, entirely unwarranted by the facts. He makes Bildad's final speech consist of chapter twenty-five and all of chapter twenty-six except the first four verses which he connects with the first six verses of chapter twenty-seven, as Job's reply.

This is to reduce Job to the level of an empty vociferator, with angry denials only to offer, in answer to serious statements, no better than the declaration of the bigot Zophar who merely made a show of reasoning. Whereas, Job's answers were full of original thought and at times longer than the other speeches. His descriptions in 9:1-14 and 12:11-25 are very similar to the one in 26:5-14. In none of his speeches did Bildad attempt such powerful descriptions.

The professor next attributes to Zophar the rest of chapter twenty-seven and all of chapter twenty-eight. This is the most objectionable of all suggestions. While 27:13-23 might seem more appropriate to Zophar, than to Job (V. 13 being similar to 20:29), yet, as a whole, the thought is supplementary to that in chapter twenty-one where Job argues that notwithstanding their prosperity the wicked are finally overthrown and brought down to death. In 27:13-23 it is the end of the wicked and of their children who follow in their steps that is pointed to (Cf. V. 13 with V. 8), though catastrophe is not excluded. Verse twelve is similar to Job's statement in 21:34, summing up the argument.

The remark of Bernard (who credits Job with chapter twenty-six and 27:1-12, that verses 13-23 of chapter twenty-seven cannot be assigned to the wicked "by one who has, like Job, over and over again asserted that they meet with nothing but unparalleled prosperity and success," does not consist with Job's thought in 27:8 and 21:30 that the wicked may enjoy immunity from trouble in this life but he is only spared for the day of wrath when "God taketh away his soul." Job's argument was that it would be well with the righteous but ill with the wicked in that day. The Hebrew

preposition is correctly translated “for” (the day of wrath).

But what is there in the superficial borrowed sentiments of the bigot, already heard, to justify a suspicion that he could rise to the originality and freshness of 27:7-12 and chapter twenty-eight? There is only one whose language approaches these utterances, —Elihu, a young man of unusual intelligence and force of character; but his time to speak had not arrived, and he may have been much impressed by Job’s wonderful descriptions. Cf. 36:26-32 and chapter thirty-seven with 26:5-14 and 28:24-26. There are other parallels between Elihu and Job; e.g. 37:7 is an echo of 12:14.

Moreover, in the twenty-eighth chapter declarations are made that God Himself, in substance, repeats interrogatively: 28:23-28 and 38:12-13, 25-26, 34-36; as if to remind Job of his own words and to show that while the source of these things is Divine, they are intended to humble and benefit man; which he had not sufficiently laid to heart. And the last verse of this chapter bears out Job’s contention against the friends, that such had been his manner of life—fearing God and keeping His commandments. Cf. 6:10; 12:13; 23:11-12.

My synopsis of these chapters proves that Professor Moulton’s arrangements is arbitrary, and that the reasoning as well as the language is Job’s. Then Job’s conclusion is pertinent to Eliphaz in 4:17-19; 15:4, 14-16; 22:12-13; to Bildad in 8:5-10; XXV; and to Zophar in 11:6-12. Compare also 27:11-12 with 16:2-

3; 19:28, and 21:2-5, 34. Job was able to teach them, not they, him, seeing the root of the matter was in him, as the sequel proved.

Ben Zev in his preface, comparing Zophar with the other speakers, says: "Zophar is the least among them, and his degree does not come to the degree of his companions who proceed him, in argument or in poetry of language. And, like an echo, he only repeats and reiterates the words of Bildad; and in order to increase the brilliancy of his figures, he strains and exaggerates his language, and amplifies it without saying one new thing. And inasmuch as he has not power to reason with words of wisdom and understanding, behold! he is the first who draws back from disputing and puts his hand to his mouth."

### I. GOLDEN DAYS OF MEMORY: XXIX

It has seemed to me that the rounds of debate virtually closed with the twenty-eighth chapter, which forms a kind of conclusion to all that precedes it, in the way of argument. What follows, while in the hearing of Job's friends, is a rehearsal of reminiscences, with comments upon the mystery of his case, and a solemn oath intended to clear himself from every false imputation. But there is no direct reference to the friends from whom he turns inward to his past, and upward to God as the only source of his vindication. His colloquy is no longer with them, but with himself and God. There can be no objection, however, to including these chapters in the final round of debate, inasmuch as the friends got the benefit of what was said. He seems, however, to have done with them and wishes only to be alone, his last word (XXXI) be-

ing a prayer for God's judicial dealing, if his life has not been as represented. This chapter no doubt was spoken with special thought of the men before him.

*He reviews the past.* Golden days of memory come back to him like an infinite balm in the midst of his suffering. Early in this contest of minds (6:10) he had uttered the memorable words: "And be it still my consolation, yea, let me exult in pain that spareth not, that I have not denied the words of the Holy One." He escapes the torment felt by those who are conscious of past evasions of duty and selfish indifference to the cries of a needy world; whose eternal future will be filled with the remorse of "remembering that in their lifetime" they "received their good things," as did Lazarus—the type of all whom the fortunate may bless—"his evil things; but now he is comforted" and they "are tormented."

It is one of the compensations of a life well-spent, to anticipate the immeasurable satisfaction a sanctified memory will give in the eternal world. Even now the good man, however tried, may recall his golden days when the summons of duty found him ready for the task and he faltered not in the path of sacrifice. It was so with Job. He never knew the pain of a wasted youth whose only residuum is the feeling of a hopeless present, against which the sacred writer warns: "Remember now thy Creator, in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Said Jean Paul Richter: "Recollection is the only Paradise from which we cannot be turned out;" meaning, of course, the recollection of the just. To Job, the past, at least, was secure; and the pres-

ent, though laden with mystery, was full of hope: "I know that my Redeemer liveth" and "I shall be justified" (19:25; 13:18). Let us note the fundamentals of this review, not dwelling upon particulars:

*God's presence and care:* Preservation; illumination; the secret of God; family comfort; plenty; constant refreshing; new manifestations of glory; strength renewed. He never dreamed all this would end.

*Job's beneficence and just dealing.*

*The honor rendered to him by men:* All classes revered his rank and character and all bowed to his wisdom and authority.

## II. MOURNFUL DAYS OF MISERY: XXX

An entire reversal of his former condition: His honor is turned into contempt and his prosperity into calamity and pain.

His honor thus turned by younger men whose fathers were lower than menials.

Divine affliction is assumed by them to justify this treatment.

The rabble aggravate his misery.

His prosperity changed to calamity and pain by Providence.

Yet he recognizes the Hand that has smitten him, but maintains it was not for indifference on his part to the sad and needy. Here was the mystery: Why his days should be turned into night, notwithstanding his fidelity. But he trusts in the justice of God: "Surely

against a ruinous heap, He will not put forth His hand; though it be in his destruction one may utter a cry because of these things." God will not make a full end of him as He does of the wicked. Thus does Job, relieved of the aggravating charges of his friends, temper his language to a milder strain and evince his confidence in the goodness of God.

### III. THE SOLEMN OATH: XXXI

Zophar had said something about "the portion of a wicked man from God" (20:29). Job, in view of the solemn oath he is about to take, applies the statement to himself as one who can expect only judgment from the Almighty who sees his ways, and numbers all his steps, if he does not tell the truth. What are the details of this oath?

*That he made a covenant with his eyes not to look upon a maid.* He purposed to avoid the occasion for temptation. This was the covenant of *purity*.

*That vanity and deceit were never practiced.*

*That crookedness, heart disloyalty and foul hands were unknown to him.*

*That he had never been guilty of adultery* "an heinous crime," calling for the severest measures and destructive of the welfare of his home. Neither in heart nor by act has he sinned thus, convinced that such a crime is punishable by the judges and is self-destructive.

*That he never wronged his servants by refusing to consider their cause, seeing they were his equals before God.* Is there not here a suggestion that equality

of manhood and right is the key to the solution of social problems?

*That he was never unjust or indifferent to the poor, the widow and the fatherless, but active for their welfare;* influenced, as he was, by fear of calamity from God and the thought of His excellency. Job flings back the charge of Eliphaz in 22:5-9. This was an evidence of Job's conscientiousness and effort to please God; not only because he was appreciative of God's worth ("Excellency"), but also because he believed God was terrible to evil-doers,—the creed of the time. Thus the creed which Job's friends make the basis of their fallacy was a support to his righteous life.

*That he never relied upon gold, pride of possession, or nature worship.* Suggestion: Idolatry was considered treason to the State as well as to God. The State is a divine institution the welfare of which depends upon the favor of its Author. Hence to worship any object but Him is to incur his wrath and imperil the safety of the State (Cf. Rom. 13:1-7). Here the snare avoided was homage to the sun and moon, the two most striking objects of creative power in nature. Men, as a rule, were impressed with these objects (Psa. 8:3; 19:1-6; Jer. 44:17-19, 25) which were worshipped by the heathen in Job's day.

*That he was never pleased with an enemy's downfall, nor slack in providing for his household, nor inhospitable, nor guilty of cowardly hiding sin "as Adam," or refusing to show himself when needed.* He cries for an audience with God and for a chance to plead to the Adversary's indictment.

*That he never withheld the wages of tillers of the soil nor unjustly treated land-owners, the sin which the apostle James denounces. (Cf. James 5:4).*

In all these phases of his oath, the severest penalties are invoked.

“The Words of Job are ended.”

Before the next chapter is begun attention should be called to Job’s knowledge of unwritten truth. He declared he had not denied “the words of the Holy One,” and that he had “esteemed the words of His mouth more than his necessary food.” What words were these? Words spoken to his own heart in hours of communion with God? Doubtless; for God would hardly call him His servant and commend him so highly, without sometimes talking to him, as He did to Abraham and other patriarchs. There is also, as Paul affirmed, the unwritten word in the hearts of those who have not a revelation, “their consciences bearing witness therewith and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them.” We have seen how imperious was the witness of Job’s conscience to that inward law and how strongly it spoke through his lips concerning his integrity. It is evident from his reference to Adam’s sin (31:33) and other events such as the creation of man (10:8; 33:6), the Deluge (12:14-15) that he also possessed, in part at least, that primeval revelation or tradition afterward recorded in the early chapters of Genesis. Passing from sire to son through Noah’s descendants, from the days of the first man, it was known to Job, who laid to heart its lessons about creation, sin, righteousness and judgment.

## QUESTIONS

1. Point out how Job is charged with presuming upon divine nescience to justify his sin.
2. In what way does Eliphaz's description of conversion call for modification? Point out its true Christian features.
3. What immemorial cry is uttered by Job and what is his supreme consolation? Two great truths.
4. What perplexity arises in Chap. 24 and how does Job finally dispose of it?
5. Can Bildad's final word be so interpreted as to save him from self-stultification?
6. What re-arrangement of Chapters XXVI-XXVIII has been proposed, and how can it be shown to be untenable?
7. What may suggest that the closing words of Job, including the solemn oath, were not spoken to his friends but merely in their presence, as a summary of reminiscences, to emphasize his integrity and to appeal to his God for confirmation?
8. Where among these closing words is there a remarkable balancing of humble trust in God against his previous expostulations?
9. And what indication is there of his possession of a primeval revelation?

## CHAPTER 6.

### *Elihu's Interposition: XXXII — XXXVII.*

#### I. THE INTRODUCTION: XXXII.

The refusal of the three men to speak further gave him the opportunity for which he waited.

His speech began with a burst of indignation against Job, “because he justified himself” (the spirit in which this self-justification was made meriting reproof), and against the three, “because they had found no answer and yet had condemned Job.” Respect for age made him diffident and deferential. But he is forced to speak for the following reasons:

His spirit is enlightened by the Spirit of the Almighty.

Wisdom and understanding are not necessarily concomitants of greatness and age.

The reasoning of Job’s disputants was inadequate.

He is constrained by the spirit within him. And he begs to say that he will respect no man’s person since he realizes his responsibility to his Maker.

#### II. THE MEDITORIAL SOLUTION: XXXIII.

Created and endowed by the Almighty, Elihu will speak sincerely, tenderly, not in power and terror but “in God’s stead,” as the Daysman that Job desired (Cf. V 6-7 with 9:32-35). “In God’s stead” may be rendered *for, in behalf of, as though*. So Elihu speaks *as if, as though* he were God Himself, thus combining the functions of a mediator who not only stands for

man before God but also maintains the claims of God upon man.

He next declares that Job's complaint against God is unjust. God is not to be striven against for He is greater than man and giveth not account of His matters (Cf. Rom 9:20-21). But He instructs and seeks to save men:

By vision and discipline;

Through an Interpreter, "One among a thousand," who will "show man what is right for him" and procure grace and deliverance because of a *ransom*.

Then Elihu shows how man may avail himself of this provision:

By prayer (Cf. 10:3).

By confession (Cf. I John 1:9).

The gracious result: God is "favorable unto him"; as manifested in *conversion*, (Cf. Matt. 18:3), *reconciliation* — "seeth His face with joy" (Cf. 2 Sam 14:24, 33; 2 Cor. 5:17-20); *justification*, including *forgiveness* — "restorest unto man his righteousness," forfeited by sin (Cf. 2 Cor. 5:21. This is how we become "the righteousness of God" in the Mediator). And *testimony* — *praise* — follows: "He singeth before men and saith, I have sinned and perverted that which was right and it profited me not. He hath redeemed my soul from going into the pit and my life shall behold the light." — *Rev. Ver.*

In this outline we have the very respects in which the Mediator, as stated by Elihu, became in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ the fulfilment of all

prophecy and the answer to all that is deepest in the need and highest in the reach of man. As the Wisdom of God, in the incarnation, He was the supreme and final prophet or "Interpreter" of God to men. As Redeemer, He became the "ransom" (atonement—Heb. *Kopher*) for all "to be testified in due time." As the Righteousness of God, He met every demand of violated law, wiping out the penalty for sin incurred by the transgressor, that the sinner "might become the righteousness of God in Him," thus experiencing reconciliation and peace.

And so the unquiet heart is composed and its longing satisfied. No wonder the murmuring gives way to praise and the erstwhile complainer becomes a witness alike to the justice and the mercy of God.

### III. THE DOCTRINE OF MEDIATION SUPPORTED BY THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD: XXXIV—XXXVII.

1. Elihu launches into a defense of his solution from the standpoint of God's sovereignty, with respect to His justice, goodness, and power. "Let us choose to us judgment," he says; "let us know among ourselves what is good."

2. Job, in asserting his own righteousness and charging God with unfairness, puts himself in the same class with workers of iniquity (34: 5-9). Verse nine suggests a limitation in his reasoning from the prosperity of the wicked, that piety does not ensure temporal good. In the Old Testament dispensation the rule for the pious was such good; the exception was ordered for a higher good, as in Job's case. He was influenced by the exception to think the righteous had no advantage in this life. Cf. 9:22-31; 12:1-10; XIV.

3. God is impeccable, impartial, sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient, just, and irresistible in dealing with the affairs of men (10-30), and is therefore not amenable to man's judgment. "For He needeth not further to consider a man that he should go before God in judgment." *Rev. Ver.*

Elihu voiced the deepest need of Job and of all who, like him, are restless under the weight of life's mysteries, in those words of fathomless meaning:

"When He giveth quietness, who then can condemn? and when He hideth His face who then can behold Him? whether it be done unto a nation or unto a man, alike.

"That the godless man reign not, that there be none to ensnare the people."—*Rev. Ver.*

The tried man needed peace, which could come only with the conviction that the sovereignty of God was engaged for him in redeeming grace. Emily Huntington Miller has thus expressed the truth:

"He giveth quietness." Sweet word of blessing,  
When the storm gathers and the skies are dark,  
Out of the tempest to His sheltering bosom,  
Fly, O my soul, and find a welcome ark.

"He giveth quietness." O Elder Brother,  
Whose homeless feet have pressed our path of pain,  
Whose hands have borne the burden of our sorrow,  
That in our losses we might find our gain.

Of all Thy gifts and infinite consolings,  
I ask but this; in every troubled hour  
To hear Thy voice through all the tumult stealing,  
And rest serene beneath its tranquil power.

Cares cannot fret me if my soul be dwelling  
In the still air of faith's untroubled day;  
Grief cannot shake me if I walk beside Thee,  
My hands in Thine along the darkening way.

Content to know there comes a radiant morning  
When from all shadows I shall find release;  
Serene to wait the rapture of its dawning,  
Who can make trouble when Thou sendest peace?

4. The proper attitude, then, is not in thinking one should be exempt from trouble but in humble submission to the holy Will which seeks our freedom through pain (31:33). "Shall His recompense be as thou wilt, that thou refusest it? for thou must choose." — *Rev. Ver.*

5. "Men of understanding will say, yea, every wise man, that Job speaks without knowledge," and should be disciplined, because he "*answers like wicked men*, adding rebellion to his sin and multiplying his words against God" (34:37).

This charge is very different from that made by the three who contended Job was wicked because he was suffering, a position he resented as belying his consciousness and his life of integrity. It might be said with reason that Elihu's statement was correct, as Job did not have the light Elihu throws upon the case and failed in the spirit and manner of his questioning the wisdom and justice of Divine Providence, like other men who meet with reverses. The value of the consciousness as a witness to personal integrity cannot be lightly set aside. Job was justified in this insistence, but was mistaken in setting up this fact as a corrective of the providences of God.

6. The folly of Job's comparison (35:2-8) evident from the exaltation and self-sufficiency of the Divine Being. The question, "What profit shall I have more than if I had sinned?" suggests that his prosperity was not considered the basis of his piety.

7. Prayer that is the forced exclamation of misery without willing submission to God avails nothing; for the motive is merely desire for temporal relief, not a longing for God Himself "who giveth songs in the night" (10-13). "There they cry, but none giveth answer because of the pride of evil men. Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it."

Has there been no instance of this in recent years? The nations were settled on their lees. God was forgotten in "the pride of evil men." The god of evolution and destructive criticism swayed his scepter over School, Church and State. The teaching of naturalism and "survival of the fittest" prevailed. Commercialism and militarism were first in aim and motive. Naturalism took precedence over revelation; culture supplanted spirituality. In the cataclysm of war there was a cry for help "by reason of the arm of the mighty." In a poem then appearing, entitled "A Prayer in Time of War," Alfred Noyes powerfully portrayed the situation:

"Thou, whose deep ways are in the sea,  
Whose footsteps are not known,  
Tonight a world that turned from Thee  
Is waiting — at Thy Throne.

The towering Babels that we raised  
Where scoffing sophists brawl,  
The little Antichrists we praised —  
The night is on them all.

*The fool hath said . . . The fool hath said . . .*  
And we, who deemed him wise,  
We who believed that Thou wast dead,  
How should we seek Thine eyes?

How should we seek to Thee for power  
Who scorned Thee yesterday?  
How should we kneel, in this dread hour?  
Lord, teach us how to pray!

Grant us the single heart, once more,  
That mocks no sacred thing,  
The sword of Truth our fathers wore  
When Thou wast Lord and King.

Let darkness unto darkness tell  
Our deep unspoken prayer,  
For, while our souls in darkness dwell,  
We know that Thou art there."

But have these nations dethroned the god of "evolution" and "higher criticism?" Have the vain idols of reason been swept out of church and school? Has there been a sincere return to supernaturalism and to the Word of the Lord that endureth forever?\*

8. Presumption is not vindication; the silence and patience of God are no reason for Job to multiply words (14-16). When that silence was finally broken, Job had very little to say.

9. Elihu proceeds further to vindicate the righteousness of God (36:1-4).

(a) God is mighty yet propitious and, because of His understanding, makes a distinction between the wicked and the afflicted (5-6; "giveth to the afflicted their right"—*Rev. Ver.*) How graphically the sequel showed this! Job got his right.

(b) His care for the righteous whose penitence and obedience bring blessings in contrast with what befalls the disobedient (7-15).

(c) Even so would He have done for Job who is more occupied with the judgments of God than with

\*"Unfortunately we have subscribed to the doctrine of evolution and we are its products; our civilization is today an altar to the god of material progress." Professor Louis T. More—*The Dogma of Evolution*, p. 317.

His goodness, and whose sense of sufficiency endangers his participation in the great ransom (16-21. Cf 17-18 with 34:36 and 33:24).

(d) God is the incomparable Teacher, whose greatness and power in His wondrous works should be considered (22-32). Only such a Being is competent to provide a ransom and overcome the powers of evil. The plan of redemption is as truly a proof of infinity as the creation of the material universe. Says an able thinker: "The Bible never wavers in the conviction that it takes omnipotence no less to redeem the lost than to create the world, and that, since creation itself, as has been wisely said, is 'built upon redemption lines,' the two manifestations of the Divine almighty-ness are ultimately one. Thus the supreme example of Divine omnipotence at work is supplied by the New Testament picture of the world's salvation through the Cross" — H. R. Mackintosh, "The Originality of the Christian Message," p. 44.

Elihu affirms that mystery (26) does not exist apart from evidences of Divine goodness. The gentleness and beneficence of the Lord are discernible in His natural works (28, 31). The inference is that Job should turn from his own trial to reflect upon these; let him cease from himself awhile.

(e) The speech concludes with a thrilling description of a storm and of other ways of God's working in nature through which He displays His wisdom and power toward man and yet in which He veils Himself as the incomprehensible God (chap. 37). Men fear Him, therefore, as One who "regardeth not any that are wise of heart" (v. 24). A humble, teachable spirit becomes those who wait till the clouds are gone and

the light shines through all mystery (19-21). The comforting thought is added that "in justice and plenteous justice He will not afflict"; i. e. in all His providential dispensations He will not pervert these attributes which must never be dissociated from His loving kindness (Cf. Lam. 3:33). He may chasten, but only that men's souls "may be brought back from the pit" through "a ransom" and be "enlightened with the light of the living."

Such is Elihu's solution of the problem of suffering and such his reasoning in support of it. In view of the failure of the three friends to offer anything beyond the traditional verdict and of Job's able addresses despite his bewilderment and complaint, the part played by this young man in the drama of pain, is certainly remarkable.

The claim, before mentioned, that his speech is irrelevant and inferior to the rest of the poem, and to be regarded as an interpolation, makes against the unity of the book and does not deserve serious consideration. "As to Elihu," says the learned Ben Zev, "he also was a man wonderful for wisdom." And Bernard remarks: "The reason why these German critics speak so disparagingly of Elihu seems to us clearly to be this, that to none of them has been revealed the real pith of his powerful and decisive argument."

### *Questions*

1. What is Elihu's solution for the problem that has been before us?
2. Does it anticipate the New Testament?
3. With the exposition of what great truth does Elihu support his doctrine of mediation? Give some particulars.
4. How does this truth minister to a quiet and godly life? Note pages 78-83.
5. What bearing did it have on the great world-war? Pages 80-81.
6. What phase of it has been declared to be indispensable to the work of redemption?

## CHAPTER 7

### DIVINE INTERVIEW WITH JOB:

#### XXXVIII—XL, 1-6

In this interview Jehovah begins with a question which is at once a rebuke and a challenge. It cannot be appropriately applied to Elihu for these reasons:

1. The question is duplicated in 42:3, where Job is evidently the person meant.
2. The entire context is addressed to Job as one who is challenged to review his utterances in the light of what follows. The Divine accusation of "words without knowledge" can apply only to what he had said regarding the mystery and severity of God's providences. When he vindicates the character of God against the mistaken view of the three friends, he speaks "the thing which is right", as the Lord declared (42:7). These friends whom, of course, the question would benefit, are seemingly ignored in the interview. Their time comes again later. Job must first be enlightened. Note Job's replies in this connection: 40:1-5; 42:3 (2nd part), 5-6.

3. Elihu is endorsed by Jehovah, as similarity of statements indicate:

Elihu—36:27-32; 37:3, 11-13.

Jehovah—38:25-27, 34-37.

Elihu—37:6-10, 17.

Jehovah—38:29-33.

Here are the same ideas of God's control of mundane affairs by His ordinances in nature. Elihu's descriptions are supplemented and amplified by Jehovah.

Furthermore the trend of Elihu's whole argument (XXXIII-XXXVII) accords with the Divine revelation.

The Divine argument consists in a striking contrast between the limitations of Job and the infinity of God, embracing the two fundamental facts,—that the works of God are inexplicable by man and impossible to man. Incidentally, the indispensable character of these works for man's well-being is included. Throughout the argument, then, the mystery, power, and beneficence of the universe are emphasized. The following are the principal lines of thought:

I. *The Great First Cause*: XXXVIII 4-11, etc.

1. *The earth created long before man* (4-7 with Gen 1:12).

The first superhuman intelligences were angels, whose creation preceded that of the earth, for they celebrated its foundation with "shouts of joy" (7). The first four days of the creation are suggested somewhat in reverse order (8-26); the fifth and sixth are included in the general descriptions of denizens of water, air, and land. Man, the crown of this creation, is the subject addressed in his representative (Job).

2. 3rd Day. *Division of land from sea* (38:8-11; Gen 1:9-10).

3. 4th Day. *Day and night—by ordinance of Lights* (38:12-15, 24, 33; Gen 1:14-18).

4. 1st Day. *Origin of Light* (19-21: Gen 1:3-5).

5. 2nd Day. *Firmament (Expanse) dividing the waters above from the waters below* (38:25-26, 34-35, 37 and Cf. 36:27-28; Gen 1:6-8).

---

Wonderful is the confirmation of the Genesis account of creation by science! More and more we are seeing that the Creator provided, from the very beginning, for the vindication of His inspired Word, in the materials and forces of the universe which He endowed man to explore. "Where is the way where light dwelleth?" It was once thought that the sun was the only source of light; but the sun itself is a creature and cannot account for light. The Bible which tells us that light existed before the sun and moon became radiating centers for the earth, also gives us the true explanation: "God is light." We may, therefore, say reverently, that every glint and gleam of light, every bit of radiance from any cosmical source whatever is but a reflection of Him "who only hath immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto;" no man in mortal state; for only as redeemed, saved, and glorified spirits can we "see His face" and dwell in that city which hath "no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God enlightens it and the Lamb is the light thereof."

What we see in nature are but rays of His effulgence, or of His own creative touch. "His brightness," said the prophet, "was as the light; He had rays coming forth from His hand: and there was the hiding of His power" (Hab. 3:4 *Rev. Ver.*). He has encased this quality in many things; so that, as knowledge grows, we discern His beneficence in thus putting at man's service something of His own ineffable fulness. An article read before the American Philosophical Society treated of an invisible light which is "filtered through a special violet lens and can be projected with absolute accuracy a distance of six miles. Only one person at the receiving end can see the light, and he must be

equipped with a sheet of paper or cloth which is phosphorescently treated. When the light hits the paper or cloth it shows green." This light was successfully used for signalling purposes on the battlefield in France.\*

The spectrum is a means of bringing hidden things to light—or, rather, of making visible the light which inheres in creation. Professor Tyndall analyzed a beam of light by this means, showing the elements that exist in white light. Then he added: "At this end of the spectrum there is another quality, but we have no sense to discern it." He demonstrated its presence by certain chemical effects, showing that it existed as an active power at that point of the spectrum.

Radium, a most mysterious and powerful element, glows in the dark with a strange, unearthly brilliancy and has the property of imparting radiance to objects near it, and doing other wonderful things. Says Professor Soddy: "Tracked to earth, the clew to a great secret for which a thousand telescopes might have swept the sky forever and in vain, lay in a scrap of matter, dowered with something of the same inexhaustible radiance that hitherto has been the sole prerogative of the distant stars and sun." The professor goes on to say: "The aspect which matter has presented to us in the past is but a consummate disguise, concealing latent energies and hidden activities beneath a hitherto impenetrable mask. The ultra-material potentialities of radium are the common possession of all that world to which in our ignorance we used to refer as mere inanimate matter. This is the weightiest lesson the existence of radium has taught us. . . .

\*Philadelphia Record. Sunday School Times.

This internal store of energy, which we learned of for the first time in connection with radium, is possessed to greater or less degree by all elements in common, and is part and parcel of their internal structure."

Sir William Crookes declares: "The phenomena of radium require us to recast many of our ideas of matter, electricity, and energy, and its discovery promises to realize what, for the last hundred years, have been day-dreams of philosophy."

The utility of the X-ray was greatly enhanced by a tube invented by Dr. W. D. Coolidge, assistant director of the Federal Electric Company's research laboratory in Schenectady. And now the new cathode-ray tube invented by him gives off rays which are of the nature of the rays of radium, and Dr. Coolidge estimates that the new tube furnishes as many of these rays as a ton of radium. "With the throw of a switch he summons from the invisible world a mighty stream of mysterious energy which transforms, magically, every object which it touches and brings into being new forms and substances never before seen by man. At his word a pure crystal glows with cold light and flashes bluish sparks; the gray face of granite turns brilliant with many colors; colorless gas changes into yellow powder; liquids change into solids; metal takes on a coat of 'paint' applied by unseen hands: insects and germs perish instantly." (Hyatt E. Gibson in *Popular Science Monthly*, Jan. 1926).

Dr. Robert A. Millikan, the eminent scientist, claims to have discovered the "cosmic ray" which he describes as hitting the earth from every direction and as being the most penetrating ray known, piercing through many feet of lead. "We cannot even begin to assert

what change in man's view of the universe this ray will bring about," he said.

The refraction of light is evidently meant by Job 38:12-14, the rays being turned out of their direct course to "take hold of the ends of the earth." All the phenomena of vibrations connected with light, heat, sound, and electricity were somehow known by this ancient author. We are told that "the morning stars sang together" — a fact understood by the Psalmist who says: "Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice." (Heb.—sing; suggestive of vibrations).

Then think of the radio! No thoughtful person can tune in on the currents of music that sweep across immense distances without feeling as did one who wrote in his diary: "A glorious organ recital tonight! Marvelous are the works of God! To think of listening to such raptures at a distance of one thousand miles!" Browning was right when he said:

"God is the Perfect Poet,  
Who in creation acts His own conceptions."

The latest inventions, which enhance the wonders of telephone and screen, reproducing both voices and living likenesses of people, raise the expectation of greater things in the future.

The effect of all these discoveries is to convince us that light and energy are an emanation from the inexhaustible fountain of Deity, and that the treasures of the Almighty can be known only as He is pleased to have them known, proving the absolute dependence of man upon his Creator. Can one imagine a difficulty in the appearance of light before the fourth day of crea-

tion? It is first in the order of preparation for man's creation; it is last in the process of consummating his redemption (Rev. 22:5). And what a hint is this of the revelation of God in Christ who is the Light of Life? "In Him was life and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). A modern writer refers to *Truth* and *Love* as the attributes which express that revelation: "In the Bible love is symbolized by red, and truth by blue; the combination of red and blue gives violet—the incomparable hue of radium. Also, red is the first color in the solar spectrum, and violet the last; and Jesus said, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last'". The use of the redemptive name of God when He speaks to Job is thus profoundly significant.

The description of the cause of rain, as epitomizing the event of the second day of creation, is also very interesting. Elihu had spoken of the first stage in the production of rain—the evaporation of water and its subsequent distillation in the form of rain: "For He draweth up the drops of water which distil in rain from His vapour, which the skies pour down and drop upon man abundantly"—*Revised Version*. The voice of Jehovah completes the thought: "Who hath cleft a channel for the water flood, or a way for the lightning of the thunder, to cause it to rain on a land where no man is, on the wilderness," etc. The precipitation of rain by electricity is a phenomenon well known.

## II THE UNFATHOMABLENESS OF HIS REACH: (38:16-17).

### 1. To the lowest deep of life (V. 16).

The uttermost need is not beyond His help. Creatures at the bottom of the sea are His care. As that

word "uttermost" means, He is able to save "to the end" of every lack, of every requirement and of every longing of created and ransomed being. Cf. Heb. 7:25.

## 2. To the end of the mystery of death (17).

No one knows but God what lies beyond. Any so-called communication of departed spirits with the living of earth, contradicting as it does the explicit teaching of Scripture (1 Chron, 10:13-14; 2 Sam. 12:21-23; Job 16:22; 14:13-21; Isa. 8:19-20; Luke 16:23-31), in so far as it is not a matter of conscious fraud and trickery, is the lying impersonation of demons. This verse (38:17) absolutely closes the gates against such a communication. No saint who has entered the future world or has been granted an inside view, has ever been permitted to reveal what that view was. The apocalypse of John belongs to a different class. So does the scene on the Mt. of Transfiguration. Paul was caught up to the third heaven, whether in or apart from the body, only God knew, and "heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Cor. 12:4). God seals the lips of the departed, as He did those of Lazarus.

"Behold a man raised up by Christ!  
The rest remaineth unreveal'd;  
He told it not; or something sealed  
The lips of that Evangelist."

## III. THE BREADTH OF HIS PERCEPTION: 38:18-21.

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place" and "the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee." Therefore He alone knows what to do and how to do it. The irony of verse twenty-one is the Lord's way of answer-

ing Job's plea for exemption from suffering on the ground of frailty and mortality, before noticed (14:1-6)). Why, then, does Job presume to judge the ways of the Eternal One who dwells in light, the paths to whose house are impenetrable. "Doubtless thou knowest for thou wast then born and the number of thy days is great!" (*Rev. Ver.*) It is this fact that makes the note of submission essential to true prayer — "Thy will be done." The attitude of Charles Kingsley illustrates the caution that becomes those who pray about temporal affairs. One summer in England the clergy were praying for dry weather. Kingsley, explaining his refusal to do so, said, in a sermon: "How do we know that in praying God to take away these rains, we are not asking Him to send the cholera in the year to come? I am of opinion that we are . . . . Now, perhaps you may understand better why I said that I was afraid of being presumptuous in praying for fine weather." The praying would have been proper with the note mentioned.

But we must take care that we do not limit God's sympathy for His children, or His control of His own works in their behalf. "Knowest thou the ordinances of the heavens? Canst thou establish the dominion thereof in the earth? Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?" No; but He has only to speak, and the elements obey His will. The dominion of His ordinances is "in the earth," for the furtherance of His benevolent purposes concerning its creatures, with man as their highest end. And numerous instances in the Scriptures prove that prayer is answered for temporal as well as spiritual deliverances.

#### IV. THE MARVEL OF HIS CHEMISTRY (38:23, 29-30).

The chemistry of the skies, like that of the earth is perfect. To the degree that man can discover the method of combining or separating elements, and of imitating the processes of their precipitation, does he approach perfection in his works. But he can do nothing without the means which God places at his service.

The crystal is said to be the perfect test of a substance. Therefore the chemist, to find the truth of a question at issue, reduces the matter at hand to the form of crystal, which reveals whether it is one thing rather than another. But who can tell why it is so? Who has entered the treasuries of snow and of hail, to see how the frost is gendered? Its microscopic perfection is the secret of Him whose work may be imitated but not explained. The potential energy of even the smallest atom is an awe-inspiring tribute to the greatness and power of God. Madam Curie's gram of radium, of the bulk of a peanut, was encased for transportation across the ocean in one hundred thirty pounds of wood, lead, and steel. It is said that its potential energy, if released at once, would have lifted the forty-six thousand ton ship and cargo out of the water to destruction. "The single atom is therefore in reality a complete microcosm in which all the problems with which we are occupied in our macrocosm — in comparison with the unfathomable world — all itself but an atom—probably recur."\*

The sum of the matter is that God is potentially manifest in the infinitesimal things of creation as well as in the vast sweep of orbits and suns. We can no

---

\*Hoffding, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 259.

more condense such energy as noted in an atom than we can create the atom. And as for "the ordinances of the heavens," their Divine Author alone is capable of their control and use. "Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew? . . . or who can pour out the bottles of heaven, when the dust runneth into a mass, and the clods cleave fast together?" We know how helpless we are in a drought. Our sprinkling pots are a sorry make-shift compared to God's river which is "full of water." Leave it to Him to "cleave a channel for the water flood and a way for the lightning of the thunder, to cause it to rain."

#### V. THE VARIETY AND WISDOM OF HIS PROVIDENCE. AS SEEN IN

##### 1. *Its lavishness* (38:26-27 Cf. 39:1-8).

"The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works" (Psa. 145:9).

##### 2. *Its tenderness* (38:41).

How touching the words — "when His young ones cry unto God!" This mighty God is moved by the sight of helplessness. "Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father," said our Lord. His sympathy is as wide as His perception. How often has this truth been an inspiration to His servants. Says Bishop Taylor Smith: "While I was traveling in Africa; I was one day pushing my way through a forest. Great trees rose all around, making it very dark. I was tired out, and feeling almost like giving in, when, suddenly, I saw among the thick undergrowth in front of me something white. As I got nearer, I saw it was a most beautiful lily, growing there in that dismal swamp, all

by itself, and my heart warmed as I remembered Him, whose care for me had never failed. In that dark hour I thought, 'Surely He must have planted that beautiful lily there to remind me of Himself.' I shall never forget God's message to me that day in far-off Africa."

He is the true scientist who, as the interpreter of Nature, recognizes the hand of God in all His works. Lord Kelvin, walking in the country with Liebig, another scientist, asked him if he believed that the grass and flowers grew by mere chemical forces; and Liebig answered, "No, no more than I could believe that the books of botany describing them could grow by mere chemical forces."

### *3. The power of its mandates:*

#### *a) In the change of seasons (38:31-33).*

As he "sealeth up the hand of every man" (37:7) by winter, so that toil decreases and beasts hibernate, so He releases the flow of spring, and the signs of the Zodiac make their round.

#### *b) In the instinct of animals (38:39-41; XXXIX).*

"Doth the hawk soar by thy wisdom and stretch her wings toward the south?"

#### *c) In the intuitions of men (38:36).*

"Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? Or who hath given understanding to the mind?"

Man is a creation, not the result of an evolutionary process. He got nothing from the animal world below him, while it is void of the endowments that constitute him a rational, spiritual being. Instinct acts in one in-

variable direction with marvelous accuracy but without the power of reason to change its course when that is interrupted or imperiled by accident; as in the case of the ostrich, "because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath He imparted to her understanding" (39:13-17). Fabre speaks of "the insect's mental incapacity in the presence of the accidental" and says: "Instinct is essentially unfamiliar with generalities; its knowledge is always confined to limited points."\*

But *man* — what language is adequate to describe his capabilities and achievements? Shakespeare has, perhaps, come as near doing justice to the subject as anyone could do: "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god!"

Speaking of the restricted operation of animal instinct, Professor O'Toole says: "Man, in a word, is *emancipated from limitations to the singular and the concrete* by virtue of his unique prerogative, reason, or intelligence, the power that enables him to *generalize from the particular and to abstract from the concrete*. This is the secret of his unlimited versatility. This is the basis of his capacity for progress. This is the root of his freedom; for his will seeks happiness in general, happiness in the abstract, and is not, therefore, compelled to choose any particular form and concrete embodiment of happiness, such as this or that style of architecture, this or that form of government, this or that form of clothing, etc., etc. Teleology is but a material expression of intelligence, and may, therefore, occur in things destitute of intelligence, but ver-

\*Mason Bees, Chap. VII; Life of the Caterpillar, p. 89.

satility is the inseparable concomitant and infallible sign of an inherent and autonomous intelligence. Lack-  
ing this quality, instinct, however telic, is obviously not intelligence.”\*

One should not miss the suggestiveness of the verse about wisdom and understanding as God’s gift to man immediately following the one which sounds like a challenge to man’s inquiring spirit as well as a lesson to his pride: “Canst thou send forth lightnings, that they may go and say unto thee, Here we are?” (38:35). Elihu had said, “He covereth His hands with the lightning and giveth it a charge that it strike the mark” (36:32 *Rev. Ver.*). Light, lightning, electricity illustrate the truth that power belongeth unto God. All are His agents, subject to His will. Only as He wills can they be known and put to use. Hence, when He asks, Canst thou make electricity thy servant, the answer is, Yes, man has done that as his Creator willed, and thus evinced his capacity to obey the first command to “subdue the earth and have dominion.” Benjamin Franklin sent up his kite and brought down sparks of electricity, thus paving the way for the discoveries of others who have harnessed this mighty force for human service.

Now if God is to have His due, He must be devoutly acknowledged as the source of this inexpressible good. Yet not every inventor has been as humble as was the inventor of the electric telegraph. A clergyman who often met him in the Astor Library, New York, once asked him this question: “Professor Morse, when you were making your experiments yonder in your rooms

---

\**The Case Against Evolution*, p. 259.

in the university, did you ever come to a stand, not knowing what to do next?"

"O, yes; more than once."

"And at such times, what did you do next?"

"I may answer you in confidence, sir," said the professor, "but it is a matter of which the public knows nothing. Whenever I could not see my way clearly, I prayed for more light."

"And the light generally came?"

"Yes. And I may tell you that when flattering honors came to me from America and Europe on account of the invention which bears my name, I never felt that I deserved them. I had made a valuable application of electricity, not because I was superior to other men, but solely because God, who meant it for mankind, must reveal it to some one, and was pleased to reveal it to me."

How appropriate then, the first message that passed over the wire — "What hath God wrought!"

So in the outcome of this divine drama, Job got such a conception of the unapproachable supremacy of the Being with whom he had expostulated, such a realization of the wisdom, justice, power and benevolence of God, and of his relative unimportance in the vast scheme of things, that when challenged to answer, at the close of the Lord's first address, he could only say that he was of small account and that he would not attempt to speak again. The implication is that he would not air his opinions, but would let the word of the Lord prevail.

The end was not yet. Job was now a good listener and Jehovah made the second address, setting forth —

#### VI. THE ILLIMITABLENESS OF HIS POWER:

1. In contrast with the limitations of man (40:7-14).

2. As reflected in the strongest of His creatures, to which man is inferior in strength (40:15-24; 41:1-34).

The words with which this address opens are very significant. Job was on his face in humiliation and awe. To apprehend the message to be spoken and perceive its application, he must take the attitude of courageous attention. "Let the Almighty answer me," he had said. Now the situation is reversed and the Almighty wants him to answer; but he had none to make. Had he forgotten his boast? — "O that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments." Where now were his arguments? What had become of his self-assurance? Gone, as ours must go, if we expect a revelation from the Being whose glory fills the universe. Never can we sense its presence and understand its relation to us till we take our place as erring and sinful men in the dust, where our mouths are stopped by the consciousness of our state before Him. That is our first place — the place of humility, of reverence, and of confession of our need. And there we shall be, if the Holy Spirit unveil, in any way, the majesty and holiness of God. Like one who, under deep conviction for sin, wept and cried, over and over again, "Oh, I am so sinful, and He is so holy!" we shall realize how impossible it is to live in His presence without a supernatural change.

But the place of penitence and submission is not our last place, if our lives are to count for anything and the will of God is to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. There is a time for self-abasement, until the work of conviction is done, and we are ready for a new orientation of thought and purpose. Then comes the attitude of courageous obedience; and the same God who threw us down will lift us up and put strength in us for all the events of His will, if we respond to the call — “Gird up thy loins now like a man!” The prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel found it so. Their preparation began with the conviction of their impotence, as Job’s had begun. The vision of God threw them down from their positions of comparative goodness and security — they were morally and religiously superior to many — and evoked the cry, “Woe is me, for I am undone!” But then, this end accomplished, came the summons to action, with a new commission. “I saw,” said Ezekiel, . . . “the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord; and when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake, and He said unto me, ‘Son of man, stand upon thy feet and I will speak with thee.’” Likewise Saul, the Pharisee, on his way to Damascus, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the saints of God, was overpowered by a revelation of the glorified Christ. Lying in the dust, all his ideals shattered to fragments at his feet, his pride of opinion condemned, his zeal for a mistaken cause of no avail, with the realization of his tragic mistake, he cried, “Lord, what will Thou have me to do?” “Arise, and stand upon Thy feet,” said the same Voice that humbled him, “for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me and of

the things wherein I will appear unto thee." So he girded up his loins "like a man," as Job, who was to be a witness to his generation, was commanded to do.

This command discloses God's jealousy for the dignity of His own work. "Like a man." We are not beasts, nor did we come from that order of sentient existence. Being men, we should act like men, not like animals that are without personality and reason (Cf. 38:36 & 39:13-17 *Rev. Ver.*). In our deepest self-abasement, we are yet men, capable of understanding God's word and doing it. He does not want us to lose self-respect in our self-condemnation, but to profit by our mistakes and make our lives worthy of our Divine origin. Professor Borden P. Bowne in his "Principles of Ethics" remarks that one who does not respect the humanity in himself will not long respect it in others. Have we a hint, too, in this challenge, of the reason why, in the sequel, the friends were condemned and Job vindicated? In his perplexity and questioning the justice of his treatment by his "Adversary," he maintained his integrity, "like a man," against those miserable imitators, who knew only what others said about a problem that called for a new study and a different disposition. Says Professor Moulton: "The bold faith of Job which could appeal to God against the justice of God's own visitation, was more acceptable to Him than the servile adoration of the friends who had sought to distort the facts in order to magnify God." (Cf. the case of Paul, who persecuted conscientiously, and "obtained mercy because he did it ignorantly through unbelief.")

Apart from revelation the individual has no assurance of his value to God or of God's concern for him.

Burbank who made the world his debtor by his experiments with plants, knew nothing beyond nature and, though working in God's garden, was "ignorant of the Gardener." He says that "the one infallible and clear law of existence is that *the individual is of no importance* and the race is of the first and highest and greatest importance."

Of the same import is the statement of a writer appearing in a Sunday School Journal that — "The doctrine of individualism, so rampant everywhere today, is the greatest enemy of racial progress"; and, misapplying Tennyson's reference to Nature — "So careful of the type she seems, so careless of the single life" — he continues: "Care for the race even if the individual must suffer, this must be the keynote of the future."

Such a statement logically ends in Hume's abhorrent sentiment that "in the sight of God every event is alike important, and the life of a man is of no greater importance to the universe than that of an oyster."

So thought all those conquerors who reddened the pages of history with the blood of their fellowmen. What were millions of *individuals* compared to the attainment of their imperial aims? It is the working out of Darwin's false explanation of the phenomena of Nature, contradicting the word of inspiration — "He hath made everything beautiful in its time" (Ecc. 3:11). Of the millions of blossoms that fall none are lost, for they are needed for the bees that work for man, as well as for the delight they bring with their beauty and fragrance to mind and heart.

A Scotch writer tells of an old man whom a friend saw standing near his hut, on the mountain side, with

bowed head and bonnet in his hand. Coming up to him the friend said, "I did not speak to you, Sandy, because I thought you might be at your prayers." "Well, not exactly that," said the old man, "But I will tell you what I was doing. Every morning for forty years I have taken off my bonnet here to the beauty of the world." Profusion is not waste, but is needed to enhance the beauty of the world.

The Darwinian idea of "the survival of the fittest" cannot be harmonized with the Supreme Benevolence that seeks the happiness of individuals, nor will it work in the Divine plan for the race, which cannot be *evolved* into something better. God has His *Type*, the God-Man, in whose image He is *creating* a new race. But this is a supernatural process, through changes wrought in individuals, in order to the fulfilment of the third Beatitude. Only as individuals are changed is the group affected, and only so will arise the race that will rule in the earth by the will of God.

This was the teaching of Jesus Christ who was not so much concerned for society as He was for human beings. As T. R. Glover says: "That is the central thing, it seems to me, in His teaching about God — that God cares for the individual to an extent far beyond anything we could think possible." (*The Jesus of History*, p. 96).

And this is what the book of Job which anticipates the Gospel, proclaims. Every man is of infinite worth and is sought after in the great plan of the redeeming God. The devotee of plant and brute life has no word of hope for the sinful and sorrowing among men. Unspeakably better is the sentiment voiced by the great Augustine:

“O Thou good omnipotent, who so carest for every one of us, as if Thou carest for him alone; and so for all as if all were but one! Blessed is the man who loveth Thee, and his friend in Thee, and his enemy for Thee. I behold how some things pass away that others may replace them, but Thou dost never depart. O God, my Father, supremely good, Beauty of all things beautiful, to Thee will I entrust whatsoever I have received from Thee, and so shall I lose nothing. Thou madest me for Thyself and my heart is restless until it repose in Thee.”

Now what is the purport of this second message to Job? He was profoundly affected by the first disclosure of God to him. He had seen how God's power worked; but he was to see that power from another point of view; a new application of the lesson was to emphasize his limitations. He had talked of judgment and of being justified. Could he assume the government of the world and administer it in righteousness? (40: 8-14). “Hast thou an arm like God? And canst thou thunder with a voice like Him?” Canst thou protect the helpless against the ravages of the strong? Canst thou determine the course of justice with unerring wisdom and make effective thy decree in any case whatsoever? If thou art not able for this, how canst thou adjudicate thine own case? (14). “Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be justified?”

The ignorance and impotence of man is thus seen in moral government as they were seen in natural government. The effect of the challenge on Job was to heighten the description of those creatures whose strength emphasized the weakness of men. If a man cannot withstand the rage of these mammoths, how

can he meet the God who made them? "None is so fierce that he dare stir him up; who then is he that can stand before Me?"

The point enforced is the absolute sovereignty of God (41:11 Cf. 38:13 and Rom. 9:19-21), which Job has learned to accept without gainsaying:

*Job*: "I know that Thou canst do all things, and that no purpose of thine can be restrained.

*Jehovah*: "Who is this that hideth counsel without knowledge?"\*

*Job*: "Therefore have I uttered things which I understood not; things too wonderful for me which I knew not."

*Jehovah*: "Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto Me."

But Job has had enough; there is no argument and no answer left in him but the whole-hearted confession of his submission: "I had heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

The question may obtrude, despite the foregoing exposition, does the author of this book give an adequate relation of cause to effect in making the moral transformation of Job result from the revelation of

---

\*Another interpretation puts this question in the mouth of Job as a repetition of the Lord's own words (38:2), in the spirit of humiliation and confession of his guilt. But may not the Lord Himself have repeated the question, as He did another question long afterward to Peter, to make more effective the lesson?

God in nature. We must remember that Job had only the faintest hints in his mind of the greater revelation which we possess in the Gospel, wherein the moral and spiritual glories of God as Redeemer are made known. Yet we know that men are now often profoundly affected by views of God in the natural universe and are stirred to nobler action by such views. A Christian statesman, who had the privilege, during a heated political campaign, of gazing into the heavens through a powerful telescope, said, as he turned away: "After seeing all that, it doesn't seem to matter much who is elected President." The lines of Tennyson fit well with the Statesman's feeling:—

"Our little systems have their day,  
They have their day and cease to be;  
They are but broken lights of Thee,  
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

He felt that a Being greater than parties and men was ruling over the earth. The great bacteriologist Pasteur declares his opposition to the theory of evolution in these words: "Posterity will one day laugh at the foolishness of the modern materialistic philosophers. The more I study nature, the more I stand amazed at the work of the Creator. I pray while I am engaged in my work in the laboratory." Linnaeus the botanist having watched the unfolding of a blossom, exclaimed: "I saw God in His glory passing near me and bowed my head in worship."

The writer's niece, a very intelligent young woman, in a letter to her mother, described her feelings as she looked upon that stupendous work of God—the

Grand Cañon of Colorado. She said the tears flowed unbidden down her face, so real was the sense of God's presence. A guide told a tourist that he was born in that vicinity and had lived there all his life, but that he never wearied of the wonder. "What does the canon say to you?" asked the tourist. In a hushed voice, the guide replied, "It tells me of God."

Such impressions open the way for the application of redemptive principles. Convinced of their impotence to save themselves, men feel they must seek help from Him whose wisdom and power are engaged in behalf of moral and spiritual values no less than they are for those which are natural. The answers of God solved Job's problem, not by directly dealing with it, but by acquainting him with a Being who was worthy of his devotion, whatever might be the vicissitudes of life. "They gave him," as Walter Ross Taylor puts it, "such a vision of the glory of God that his whole being was stilled into reverent trust. Filled with that Presence, he had now an experience before which difficulties disappeared. One feeling alone possessed him—that of complete satisfaction in God."

Ruskin has well said: "In the Book of Job God has thrown open to us the heart of a man apparently perfect in all things possible to human nature except humility. We are here shown that no suffering, no self-examination, however honest and stern, no searching out of the heart by its own bitterness is enough to convince man of his nothingness before God; but that the sight of God's creation will do it. For, when the Deity Himself has willed to end the temptation and to accomplish in Job that for which it was sent, He does not vouchsafe to reason with him, still less

does He overwhelm him with terror, or confound him by laying open before his eyes the book of his iniquities. He opens before him only the arch of the day-spring and the fountains of the deep; and amidst the covert of the reeds and on the heaving waves He bids him watch the kings of the children of pride. 'Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee!' And the work is done."

And so Job came about, as Robert Louis Stevenson said of himself, describing his transformation of character, "like a well-handled ship. There stood at the wheel that unknown steersman whom we call God."

### VII: THE SEQUEL (42:7-17)

The sequel was in keeping with the great principles involved: Disinterested devotion to a God who allows suffering in proof of His perfection and of His interest in the imperishable value of character. Strange paradox! Would it be known without the disciplinary processes of life, that men may serve Him for nought? And would He be a perfect Being if He could not attract their devotion in spite of the ills He permits to befall them? He is such a God that millions have willed to glorify Him in the fires rather than forsake Him. He would not be such a fountain of excellence if He were not more concerned to build character than to have the good opinion of any by promoting their temporal welfare. And that He succeeds in a task more difficult than the manufacture of suns and planets is proof that He wins their devotion, even though they suffer at His hands.

On the one hand we see a man who in suffering he cannot understand clings to God, while he main-

tains the integrity of his ways in the face of bitter assaults upon his character. On the other hand we listen to three men who dogmatize and reproach, but cannot help. When the Lord sums up the case, He addresses Eliphaz, the leader of the group, in terms that must have struck like lightning: "My wrath is kindled against thee and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job has!" Their theory that suffering is always penal would make God punish the innocent; which would be a libel on His character. Job contended God would not do that, but there must be another principle involved in his case. In his perplexity he "uttered that which he understood not" and lacked meekness under the rod of affliction. Elihu suggests the unknown principle, a position tacitly endorsed, in the summing up, by the omission of his name from the reproof administered to the others. He had not charged, as Eliphaz and his friends had, that Job's suffering was a divine punishment for sin, and therefore the Lord has no controversy with him.

The friends are summoned to repentance and told to offer the sacrifice, which signified propitiation for sin, and were assured that His "servant Job would pray for them"; for him will I accept that I deal not with you after your folly." What a blow! They thought Job needed *their* prayers; now they are thrown back upon *his* prayers as their only chance of escape. The irony and yet the seriousness of this situation! God will vindicate Himself from the misrepresentations of narrow dogmatists as well as from the machinations of Satan. And He will enlarge His servants who, burdened with mystery and disposed to question the course of Providence, yet cling to Him in desperation

and wait for His explanation. "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends."

Beautiful thought! That God did this after such a final test of Job's endurance, showed that patience had had her perfect work in him; since there is no surer mark of complete submission to God's will than to pray for those who have misunderstood and abused us. The glory he had seen, lifted him above personal considerations. Magnanimity is God-like in its superiority to petty things, and Job realized, beyond the fairest dream, the value of this trait.

"So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning."

It's wiser being good than bad;  
It's safer being meek than fierce;  
It's fitter being sane than mad—  
    My own hope is, a sun will pierce  
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched;  
    That after Last, returns the First,  
Tho' a wide compass 'round be fetched;  
    That what began best can't end worst,  
Nor what God blessed once prove accurst.

—*Browning.*

### *Questions*

1. Of what does the Divine argument consist and in how many messages is it contained?
2. State the six prime divisions of the argument.
3. In what respects does the first division show similarity to the epochs of creation in Genesis I?
4. Prove that Job had knowledge of truths of which modern science claims the credit of discovery. Divisions 1, 4, 5, 6.
5. Mention passages in Job which disprove the teaching of spiritism.
6. Does the theory of "Evolution" fare any better in this book?
7. How does the book enforce the dignity and worth of the individual?
8. And yet in what way does the second message of Jehovah prove man's limitations in moral government, as they had been manifested in the natural government of God?
9. How was Job affected by this disclosure?
10. Does the sequel bear out the purpose of the writer as stated in the first chapter?

## PART II: SPECIAL EMPHASES

### CHAPTER 8

#### THE IMMEMORIAL CRY

In a very profound sense Job was a typical man. His era of natural peace and plenty, his appalling reverses, his suffering and his demeanor under the circumstances, make him an example of what, in varying degrees, marks the lives of men.

But in no respect does this typical significance have such universal and prolonged emphasis as in the cry of anguish that came from his longing soul—"O that I knew where I might find him!"

To be sure, Job spoke for himself on that occasion, voicing his need of One who, he believed, would assuage his grief and clear up the mystery of his suffering. But in a larger sense the cry was racial, the immemorial expression of mankind's "eternal hunger" for God.

A few examples from different countries and conditions of life may serve to impress more deeply this thought.

A missionary traveling among the villagers of his district in India, saw a woman measuring her length—standing up and lying down—on the dusty road, again and again. She had already come in this manner hundreds of miles and had yet a long journey to the shrine where she hoped to realize the object of her quest. To the missionary who spoke to her kindly regarding whence she came and whither she was going and what she wanted, she had strength only to say, "Uska, Dorsan! Uska, Dorsan!" which interpreted is, "To see him! To see his face!"

Who or what was this? The same, though she knew no better way to say it, as that which came under the eyes of another missionary, in Tangier. Sitting on the veranda of his house he noticed a weary, travel-stained man from the desert, drawing near to him. He was a Mohammedan whose religion failed, as Job's had done, to make God real to his soul. This was what he said: "I have traveled five hundred miles on foot, I have walked for three months, begging as I went, often-times almost dying of thirst. I have come to Tangier, and I have come to you to know if you can tell me the way to God."

Walking across the college campus one day with a Japanese student by the name of Osaka, I said to him, "Brother Osaka, do you get homesick, so far from your country and home folks?" He answered with unmistakable fervor, "No; God-sick!"

Although a Christian by profession, he was longing for a deep, satisfying manifestation of God to his soul. I was reminded of the case cited by one who was a student where a great Christian philosopher taught. To this student, the professor one day remarked, when they were alone together, "There are times when I feel like saying, 'O for the touch of a vanished Hand and the sound of a voice that is still.'" "What do you mean, Professor?" asked the student. "I mean that I am hungry for a manifestation of God. Nothing will suffice but that."

What was this but the utterance of a reverent thinker whom philosophy alone could not satisfy? It was like the statement of Edward A. Steiner, the noted immigrant and author, who in the foreword to his book, "The Eternal Hunger," says: "I have always

been hungry for God, and still am; yet, only here and there, have I been able to come into touch with the Divine reality. ‘It is like a great light shining through a curtain,’ which is never drawn aside, leaving me eager-eyed for what is behind the veil.”

So, whether on the Indian road, in the desert, on the trail of the immigrant, in halls of learning, in cities where hum the wheels of industry,

Where cross the crowded ways of life  
Where sound the cries of race and clan,  
Above the noise of selfish strife,”

on land and sea, whatever the state or condition of man, and despite all changes of face and form, arises out of the depth of his nature the same insistent cry, “O that I knew where I might find Him!” And we may say in truth:

“Creeds change,  
All outward forms recast themselves,  
Sacred groves and temples  
Rise and rot and fall,  
Races and nations and  
The various tongues of men  
Come and go and  
Are forgotten  
In the repetition and drift  
Of many ages.  
But there lives no man  
Nor ever has lived one  
Who feeling his need  
In the silence of his heart  
Has not cried out  
Shaping some prayer  
To the unchanging God.”

Now this ages-long agony and uncertainty have but one explanation: *Man has lost God and lost the way to God.* And since he was created for God, with a nature that pines for its own, his heart has been an altar of sacrificial devotion through the centuries of his wandering. Hence the crude symbolism and innumerable forms of worship in which, in the darkness of his way, this devotion has been expressed. Has there never been a response from the invisible Object of all this? Has the prayer for light remained unanswered? Has there been no unveiling of God to the souls of men?

There are those who think that Nature alone is God's avenue of self-disclosure, who talk of the wonder and delight she affords them. But the claim thus made is due to partial reasoning from the aesthetic sense and may leave the talker an utter stranger to God as the ethical, redemptive Personality revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Apart from this revelation, thoughtful men have been oppressed by aspects of Nature which would disprove the presence of such a Being in the universe. "There is probably no strain," says Alfred Olin Curtis, "so severe upon a sensitive soul trying to live a profound life as that strain which he experiences in trying to harmonize his moral ideal with the brutal facts of the universe" (*The Christian Faith*, p. 110).

Gamaliel Bradford, writing in *Harper's Magazine*, September, 1926, of "Darwin the Destroyer", refers to him as typifying "the rigorous logic that wrecked the universe for me and for millions of others." He argues that while, according to Darwin, "belief in God is eminently useful" and "at every opportunity God is given fair play and a fighting chance", at the same time "the conflicts and difficulties are mountainous and

it would appear insuperable. And the result in any case, if God is left in His universe at all, is to remove Him very, very far away and completely to demolish all sense of His intervention in the daily actions and experiences of common life and all intimate communion and conference with Him in regard to these actions. When the *Descent of Man* is published, Mrs. Darwin writes to her daughter, quite simply, 'I think it will be very interesting but that I shall dislike it very much as again putting God further off.' For others besides Mrs. Darwin, it reduced Him quite to a vanishing point."

Mr. Bradford also refers to "our own American Henry Adams" who "asks evolution to educate him and asks in vain. All it can teach him is that *terebratula* can remain unchanged in its insignificance for centuries, while man evolves, yet in the end proves to be no whit more significant than *terebratula*. And Adams goes out, like a spent torch, uneducated, in the huge, unmeaning, whirling acceleration of theories and discoveries and plain sufferings and questions that must remain forever unanswered. Yet perhaps Adams was quite as adequate to the universe as Dr. Cadman."\*

It was Dr. Cadman who exhausted the resources of his rhetorical genius in a panegyric on the evolutionary hypothesis, using the terms evolution and development interchangeably, and affirming that it is "of all scientific theories the most easily accommodated to the demands of faith" and "supplies to all scientists and believers in religion one of the noblest conceptions of the creative mind to be found anywhere in literature."

---

\*See Appendix.

Now, not to dwell at length on the falsity of the universal premise concerning "all scientists and believers in religion" nor on the fallacy of confusing the terms "evolution" and "development", the entire extract, in view of factors of which evolution takes no account, is the veriest declamation, running counter to the positive declarations of God's Word and to Darwin's own confession of regret that he had ever "used the Pentateuchal term of creation, by which", he says, "I really meant 'appeared', by some wholly unknown process. It is mere rubbish, thinking at present of the origin of life; one might as well think of the origin of matter."

Without his background of early Christian training and ancestral belief in the Bible as the revelation of God, Cadman would hardly attempt the inconsistency of making the Bible and Evolution speak the same thing. He would go with Darwin to the end of his logic, as summarized by Mr. Bradford, and expressed by Leopardi: "Nature in all her working has other things to think of than our good or ill."

Far superior to the vain efforts to find in Nature the disclosure of God for which man, created in the Divine image, and, in his fallen state, cries, is the teaching of Scripture thus emphasized by the Christian thinker already mentioned.

"The only goal, yea, the only cosmic goal, worth reaching must be expressive, absolutely expressive, of moral concern. There is no more expanded horizon; there is no larger look at life. We will be intolerant of any evolutionary scheme which tries to substitute increase of potency and perfection in adjustment for perfection in ethical quality. If we try to explain the mys-

tery of existence at all, let us begin by refusing to explain it in any way which violates our intuitive sense of Justice and debases our moral manhood.”—Curtis, “The Christian Faith” p. 109.

One of the most striking contrasts in all literature is that of the appreciation of the attractive side of Nature by John Burroughs and the “cosmic chill” he felt as he contemplated her reverse side. At one time he could write:

“The longer I live the more my mind dwells upon the beauty and the wonder of the world. I hardly know which feeling leads, wonderment or admiration . . . I have loved the feel of the grass under my feet, and the sound of the running streams by my side. The hum of the wind in the tree-tops has always been good music to me, and the face of the fields has often comforted me more than the faces of men. *I am in love with this world: by my constitution I have nestled lovingly in it. It has been home. It has been my point of outlook into the universe.*”

Again, as the result, undoubtedly, of his ignorance of the God of the Bible, and his belief in Evolution, he confesses: “I envy my father the satisfaction he got in his church. He didn’t feel the great cosmic chill as I feel it. I mean the feeling that comes to one when he sees the tremendous processes of nature go on entirely independent of him, and knows that he is not shut in by any protecting walls, that he has to take his chances and warm himself as best he can. Such feelings the old people didn’t have—at least, not after they joined their church. I suppose I get from literature something like what father got from his church. The church saved him, and this other will save me.”

Alas, for his tragic mistake! It was a case, as the great apostle declares, of being "without hope and without God in the world," and literature could not save him. There comes a time when the deep within surges up with its protest against the mockeries of liberalism; when the shallow pretenses of a materialistic philosophy are swept away by the tide of feeling that rises to meet the swell of the Deep without, the pressure of the eternal Presence, unfelt amid the gaieties and self-satisfying pursuits of this life. And to those who talk of "nestling lovingly" in the bosom of the world, content with its transient charm, I would commend the powerful appeal of Counté Cullen for attention to something worth while, with the title—"To Lovers of Earth: Fair Warning":—

"Give over to high things the fervent thought  
You waste on Earth; let down the bar  
Against a wayward peace too dearly bought  
Upon this pale and passion-frozen star.  
Sweethearts and friends, are they not loyal? Far  
More fickle, false, perverse, far more unkind  
Is earth to those who give her heart and mind,

And you whose lusty youth her snares intrigue,  
Who glory in her seas, swear by her clouds,  
With Age, man's foe, Earth is ever in league;  
Time resurrects her even while he crowds  
Your bloom to dust, and lengthens out your shrouds  
A day's length or a year's. She will be young  
When your last cracked and quivering note is sung.

Her beauty will remain, sufficient still  
*Though you are gone, and with you that rare loss*  
*That vanishes with your bewildered will.*

And there shall flame no red, indignant cross  
For you, no sharp white scar of wrath emboss  
The sky, no blood drip from a wounded moon,  
And not a single star chime out of tune."

The soul of man must have something higher, deeper, more enduring than that which the lure of Nature and the pride of learning can offer for its devotion. And that something was the treasured possession of that other great naturalist, Audubon, who thus described his communion with God:

"During my deepest trouble I frequently would wrench myself from persons around me, and retire to some secluded part of our noble forests: and many a time, at the sound of the wood-thrush's melodies, have I fallen upon my knees and there prayed earnestly to our God. This never failed to bring me the most valuable of thoughts and always comfort; and strange as it may seem to you, it was often necessary for me to exert my will and compel myself to return to my fellow-beings."

It is the aesthetic element which is chiefly involved in viewing the beauty and grandeur of Nature, apart from that knowledge and sense of God which come only with religion. And herein it contrasts with the feelings expressed on pp. 95-96, 106-108, 121. There we have devout souls whose religious experience had made them sensible of God's presence everywhere.

Audubon realized the truth thus stated by Schweitzer: "Religion is not a knowledge of the divine which springs from the contemplation of the universe. God, we believe, is more than merely the spiritual force underlying this world. Monism and pantheism, however profound and spiritual, do not lead into the ulti-

mate problem of religion. That problem is, that in ourselves we experience God as different from the God we find in Nature: in Nature we recognize Him only as impersonal creative Power; in ourselves we recognize Him as ethical Personality. . . . To be freed from the world by being in God: that is the longing we have within us, so long as we do not numb ourselves in thoughtlessness. . . . Living spirituality, real redemption from the world, cannot come but from that union with God which is ethically determined. The religions of the East are logical mysticism, Christianity alone is ethical mysticism." (*Christianity and the Religions of the World*, pp. 66, 87).

And so we come back to this: Nature is not and cannot be the ultimate word to man. And Philosophy has no assuring word for those who want certainty. Her only answer to the anxious heart may be couched in the woeful language of Fitz James Stephen: "We stand on a mountain pass in the midst of whirling snow and blinding mist, through which we get glimpses now and then of paths which may be deceptive. If we stand still we shall be frozen to death. If we take the wrong road we shall be dashed to pieces. *We do not certainly know whether there is any right one.* What must we do? 'Be strong and of good courage'. Act for the best, hope for the best, and take what comes. . . . If death ends all; we cannot meet death better."—Quoted by Prof. James in "The Will to Believe," p. 31.

What Job said of his three friends might with equal force be said of the author of these words and of others like him who offer nothing better: "Miserable comforters are ye all." Such counsel is self-contradictory. How can one "act for the best" or "hope for the best", if he does not certainly know there is a right road?

Professor Romanes, whose speculations led him away from the Christian faith, could not endure the dreary and hopeless alternative involved in his change of opinion. Deep called to deep and the inward urge caused him to return to the God he had doubted. How striking his confession: "I know from experience the intellectual distractions of scientific research, philosophical and artistic pleasures; but I am also well aware that even when all are taken together and well sweetened to taste . . . the whole concoction is but as high confectionery to a starving man . . . there is a vacuum in the soul of man which nothing can fill save faith in God."

He came to see there is a right road, revealed by God in Jesus Christ who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." There can be no satisfying faith in God apart from this revelation. It was what Job longed for in One "that might lay his hand upon us both"—a Mediator, acting for both and serving the interests of both. See chaps. 9:32-35; 13:20-21; 16:20-21.

Job's consciousness could certify to his integrity but could evolve no knowledge of a Mediator who was God and man in one. Reason, whose limitations are noted in chaps. 11:7-10; 23:8-9; 26:14; 36:24-26; 37: 14-20; 40:1-5, afforded no help to the broken-hearted man. But when God unfolded Himself as Jehovah, One who redeems, whose power is directed by ethical will and girded by infinite benevolence, he was at peace.

Is not this what every heart in every age longed and waited for? Faith in the Coming One sustained and cheered them in their trying hours. When He came, a disciple who spoke for all, said: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life and we be-

lieve and are sure that thou art that Christ the Son of the living God." — John 6:68-69 Cf. Matt. 16:15-17.

Christ declared that what Peter confessed was revealed to him by His Father in heaven. How much this meant may be inferred from His own explanation—"I and my Father are One." This was more than oneness in sympathy and work, though even so there may be in such unity a depth of meaning far exceeding finite reckoning. But the implication plainly is that Christ spoke as God. Only so would the statement admit of no possible lack of fulfilment and bring to disciples the assurance and comfort they would need. For, as the bishop of Durham remarked: "A Saviour not quite God is a bridge broken at the farther end."

Who would trust himself to such a bridge? It needs only the test of personal commitment to the meditorial bridge of Job's longing and of Peter's confession, to banish every doubt and put the swing of victory in every step. Job was always questioning God's dealings until the personal revelation of Jehovah to him. Blessed forshadowing of what our Lord said after giving the promise of the Holy Spirit: "Ye will put no questions to me then" (John 16:23; Weymouth's translation.)

Thus He verifies His own words—"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." We pass beyond the Nicodemus stage of "How can these things be?" into an experience of knowing God in Him who is brother and friend to the limit of every need.

Now, if, as Professor James suggests, it is the part of wisdom to believe what is in the line of our needs, it must be the excess of folly to remain among the dense

shadows of nature and reason when such light and warmth invite us within. It is there, in the very heart of God, with His human arms about us, that we have no questions to ask. For we know and are satisfied. So it was with the Hindu who, worried about his sins, asked a priest how he might get rid of them. He was told to drive spikes into his shoes and walk five hundred miles and he would be saved. He did so and tottered along in agony many miles, when, exhausted, he sat down under a tree. Hearing a missionary nearby preaching about Jesus the Saviour from sin, he took off his shoes, threw them as far as he could and cried—“That’s what I want! Give me Jesus! Give me Jesus!”

The Rev. A. R. Kuldell, a Hebrew Christian, gives this testimony:

“When the Jew repeats his Shema Israel he dwells long on the word Echad, ‘the Lord is *one*.’ Rabbi Akiba, who suffered a martyr’s death, breathed out his soul with the word Echad. God being strictly one and not entering into living and loving relationship with man as we believe He did in Jesus, it follows that man’s conduct before God is simply an attitude before Him instead of a fellowship with Him and in Him. I knew God in Judaism and I never loved Him. I learned to know Him in Christ and He has changed my heart. I have thus not created another God, a rival God to Jehovah in accepting Christ as my all, but the same Jehovah, Who was a stranger to me before, became in Jesus my all in all. In Christ God came to possess me and I Him. Before, God was to me but an ‘It’, a power which I at best feared. Now He is a person manifested in the living and redeeming Christ, dwelling in my heart through the Holy Ghost.”

When a missionary in Africa was describing God as thus manifested in Jesus the Christ, a heathen woman who listened with throbbing interest, exclaimed to other natives, "I always told you there must be such a God!" She was wiser in her simplicity than Mazzini, the statesman, who once sadly remarked: "I feel God's power and law more every day, but He cannot weep with me or fill my soul's void; for I am a man still and tied to earth."

What a pity he could not, for want of faith, say as Fox, the Quaker, said when he felt the burden of sin: "Then, O then, I heard a voice which said, 'There is one, even Jesus Christ, that can speak to thy condition.' And when I heard it, my heart did leap for joy."

Yes, He speaks, if there be listening ears, to every man, in his own idiom and with accents that cause the heart to leap for joy. Said an old Welshman: "I do not understand how Jesus could be a Jew, when He always speaks to me in Welsh." Oliver Schreiner tells of an African preacher who said: "I know the Lord Jesus Christ was a white man, yet I could not pray to Him and love Him as I do, if I did not picture Him as black and with wool like myself."

Our Lord's reference to Himself as "the Son of Man" may supply the reason for these strange remarks. He was one with men of every race and clime. As Charles Wagner in *The Better Way* truly says:

"The best thing there is in God is man. A God not interpretable in terms of humanity would not exist for us. He would be a being within Himself too high and too remote. He must needs put Himself on our level and yet be above us by the measure of the infinite. Herein lies the mystery

brought upon our horizon by the revelation in Jesus.

"The God who looked at us through those eyes, touched us with that hand, called us with that voice, is greater than all the visible world. No force in Nature, no majesty terrible or smiling, no thunder of Sinai or serenity of Olympus can be compared with Him.

"But He is here, near to us. He suffers with us, weeps in our tears, and so, that the grave may be less dark, He does not desert us even there. He beholds our life, grievous and sublime, and says of each stage—I too have part in it!"

See Appendix II at close of book.

### Questions

1. What is the immemorial cry of the race indicative of?
2. Show that it is not the expression of a craving for scientific knowledge nor the outflow of the aesthetic nature.
3. Mention some illustrious examples in proof of this.
4. Where is the perfect answer given?

## CHAPTER 9

### The Sovereignty of God

No note is more often sounded in the music of this drama than the sovereignty of God. The following passages, in which Job speaks, are among the more emphatic references:

1:21; 7:3, 17-21; 9:12-15, 22-24, 32-33; 12:9-10, 14-24; 14:5, 16-20; 21:4-9, 17, 22-33; 23:13-17; 24:1, 22-24; 26:7-14; 30:19-26; 42-2.

Then Elihu, whose office it is to show the harmony of that note with the whole plan of the composition, voices his emphasis in such passages as these:

33:12-30; 34:13-33; 35:6-15; 36:5-32; 37:5-24.

Finally, the Almighty closes the subject with the magnificent crescendo of 41:11, proving that "it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy"; that He is sovereign in Grace as well as in Nature; as confirmed by the postlude of Job's repentance and vindication, and his prayer for the friends when they had offered a burnt offering for themselves.

The oriental type of mind has always stressed this great doctrine, but without those gracious, hopeful aspects which Revelation has made clear. For example, the Persian poet, Omar Khayyam, expressed the fatalistic feeling of the East in such stanzas as these:

"The ball no question makes of ayes and noes,  
But right or left as strikes the Player goes;  
And He that tossed thee down into the field—  
*He* knows about it all—*He* knows—*He* knows.

The moving finger writes; and having writ,  
Moves on; nor all thy piety nor wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,  
Nor all thy tears wash out a word of it."

And the poet thinks a better system could have been devised—one more consonant with the nature of man:

"Ah, Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire  
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,  
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then  
Remould it nearer to the heart's desire."

The poet anticipates the cheap blasphemy of occidental unbelief in accusing God of "besetting with pitfall and with gin the road he was to wander in", of making man of "baser earth" and "devising the snake with Eden", and declares the Maker should accept man's forgiveness for the sin thus caused:

"For all the sin wherewith the face of man  
Is blacken'd, man's forgiveness give—and take!"

Now such a perversion of truth comes of failing to balance the doctrine of Divine sovereignty with that of human freedom. God did not create Satan, the Adversary of God and man. He created a holy angel that fell through the abuse of his freedom. Just as He did not create a sinful man with low, brute instincts; but He made man in His own image of holiness, with intelligence and freedom; and, though tempted by Satan, man need not have yielded to the temptation and thus have become sinful, with darkened intelligence and a depraved moral nature that has entailed such frightful heritage of sin and woe in the world. The infinite Being could never have been satisfied with brute creatures, incapable of rational choice and fellow-

ship with Himself in love and service. Hence in the creation of man He must needs take the risk of man's disobedience to His will and of the woe thus involved.

But back of and above such a possibility were the infinite wisdom and power to deal with the situation. God's sovereignty would prevail in spite of the perversions of man's freedom.

The remark of Humboldt that "the history of the world is not intelligible apart from a government of the world," is true only because that government has not been left wholly to men. They are instruments of a stronger Hand that moves along the path of events.

He who does not divine this fact is a poor observer. It is told of Pope Adrian that when he built a college at Louvain he caused this inscription to be written in letters of gold on the gates thereof: *Trajectum plantavit, Louvanium rigavit, Caesar dedit incrementum*; that is, Utrecht planted, Louvain watered, Caesar gave the increase. Somebody wrote underneath, *Hic Deus nihil fecit*: Here God did nothing. Commenting on this incident, Flavel said: "Carnal men sow, and reap, and eat, and look no farther."

It is not so with the thoughtful student of history, which is but the record of God's working among men. What we call Providence is the hand of God behind visible scenes, controlling and guiding movements, shifting forces, and making even the wrath of man contributory to His purposes regarding this world. Signs of this agency may not be understood till long afterwards but they at last become manifest. So that we may, in a large way, adopt the language of Shakespeare as expressive of this thought:

“There’s a divinity that shapes our ends  
Rough hew them how we will.”

But while His own glory is the goal of His providences, it is through men that this goal is reached. Hence the value of the human material with which He works and the significance of human leadership. He does the best He can with the material, and if an element of resistance intervenes, the Divine Potter knows how to make it another vessel, and goes on with His work.

The only thing, in this view, that is worth while, is *man*. For him the earth was formed; for him the mountains were reared and the ocean beds scooped out; for him the continents were planned and the nations settled. For him the great movements of history went forward. And we may say with Lowell,

“Manhood is the only immortal thing  
Beneath Time’s changeful sky”;

And with Tennyson:

“Tho’ the giant Ages heave the hill  
And break the shore and evermore  
Make and break, and work their will;  
Tho’ the world and world in myriad myriads roll  
Round us, each with different powers  
And other forms of life than ours.  
What know we greater than the soul?  
On God and God-like men we build our trust.”

As we thus build, the Almighty works out His purposes through them and us. Sometimes the most seemingly insignificant thing has been the pivot upon which have turned great events, fraught with the most tremendous consequences to the world. But whether

simple or complicated have been passing events, Divine Providence has always had its innings. The blindness and self-conceit of men have only made these the more signal. Cf. Chap. 12:14-25.

When Napoleon proposed to conquer Russia, the Russian Ambassador said to him, "Sire, remember that man proposes but God disposes." The haughty conqueror replied, "I want your master to understand that I am he that proposes and also disposes." Well, the blasphemer with his army reached Moscow, where he hoped to spend the winter. But fires broke out in the city, God's snowflakes began to fall, and Napoleon retreated. What with attacks of the enemy that hung on the flanks and rear of his army, and deaths from sickness, cold and other accidents of the retreat, only a fragment of the army got back. Officials reported to the Russian Emperor that they had buried nearly 214,000 French corpses and more than 95,000 dead horses to prevent pestilence.

Hugo Stinnes, the German multi-millionaire, who profited enormously by the World War, "taking chances on his country's misfortunes" and "gambling on the fall of the mark", used to boast, "Europe can't get along without me. Germany, Austria, Hungary, they can't get along without me, and neither can England."

But it was a vain boast. Though possessed of such wealth and a power in politics, he died without regret on the part of any country. As one financial authority said of his going: "The world has lost nothing. Perhaps it has gained something. Vast wealth in the hands of an unscrupulous man is a menace of which

Germany and the world are well rid.”—New York Commercial.

How poor a thing is man when he fails to recognize the sovereignty of God over nations and men! And even though he may in a general way acknowledge the principle, he can have little conception of the extent of its application to affairs in which he is a participant. Years and often generations are needed to disclose the measure of its working.

When Tchitcherin at Genoa said, “I feel here always the sense of latent underlying issues vaster than anything we can define, and making through us, or in spite of us, towards some future we cannot guess”, he illustrated the above remark. Another who was at that conference referring to Tchitcherin’s statement, said: “That was part of it, no doubt. We all felt it with him that the horoscope of thirty nations was being cast, but that to guess it was beyond us.”

The far-reaching consequences of the World War cannot yet be told. We are too near that world cataclysm to estimate its results. Going farther back, consider what would have happened if the Spanish Armada had succeeded in Spain’s design of conquest, against England. Or, had she not lost her possessions in our own country. A review of conditions in countries governed by her for centuries must convince any intelligent person that there was a Divine Providence in preventing such a possibility. And when the “invincible Armada” was harrased by the English fleet and finally blown on the rocks by a mighty wind and annihilated, England celebrated this providential victory by an inscription in Latin which read, “God blew and they were scattered.”

What saved Europe from Moslem ascendancy and religion? The victory of Charles Martel and his Franks over the Saracens in the Eighth Century and that of the great Polish patriot John Sobieski with his valiant army before the walls of Vienna in the Seventeenth Century. By the former "the tide of Moslem conquest was forever stayed in the West", and by the latter the Tartar hordes were driven out never to return.

That God's hand was in these victories none will deny. Sobieski had under him seventy thousand men to face a Moslem host of three hundred thousand, but his name repeated along the Ottoman lines struck terror to the hearts of the infidels. When he ordered an advance, he shouted "Not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thee be the glory!" An eclipse of the moon at the time increased the consternation of the superstitious Moslems. Under the terrific impact of charge upon charge by the Poles the rout of the enemy was complete. "Can you not aid me?" cried the Grand Vizier, as the Tartar chieftain fled past him. "No," was the reply; "I know the King of Poland, and I tell you that with such an enemy we have no safety but in flight. And look at the sky. See if God is not against us!"

The Tartar's cry of terror was as providentially true as was the flight of the Kings of Canaan, under similar circumstances, before Joshua's army.

Find in the subsequent history of the Jews striking confirmation of the truth here advocated. Exiled and scattered everywhere, they "remembered Zion", became intensely monotheistic, and established synagogues, in which Gentile proselytes as well as Jews,

were first to hear the gospel preached, in every place visited by the Apostles.

Another instance from pre-Christian history of God's sovereignty at work preparing the way for the diffusion of Christian truth is furnished by the career of Alexander the Great. We learn from Ancient History that at the time of Theban supremacy, Macedonia became so strong that Pelopidas, Theban General, invaded the country, checked the ambition of its ruler, and brought back to Thebes the young prince Philip as a hostage. This prince, while thus situated, became versed in the civilized arts of Greece, and especially in the military system of Epaminondas and thus became fitted for his future work as the King of Macedonia.

Consider what this was to mean ultimately to the world. His son, Alexander the Great, by his universal conquests, which opened the widest opportunity for Greek colonization and made the Greek language current everywhere, paved the way for the spread of Christianity. Greek became the vehicle of divine revelation, and the news of Salvation was proclaimed by Christians in that matchless tongue.

Mention has been made of the providence of God in the early history of the American Republic. A South American statesman asked a visitor from the United States how to account for the progressive, prosperous state of this country in the past as contrasted with the deplorable conditions that have prevailed in his own part of the world, and he answered the question himself by saying that those who came to South America cared only for conquest and gold, while the pilgrim forefathers brought with them the ideal of God and a pure worship.

When our national independence was gained, delegates met to form a Constitution. Several weeks of discussion went by with no agreement and they would have adjourned without accomplishing the purpose of the convention. Then it was that Benjamin Franklin, addressing George Washington, said:

“Mr. President, the small progress we have made, after four or five weeks’ close attendance and continual reasonings with each other, our different sentiments on almost every question, several of the last producing as many noes as ayes, is, methinks, a melancholy proof of the imperfections of the human understanding. We, indeed, seem to feel our own want of political wisdom, since we have been running all about in search of it. We have gone back to ancient history for models of government, and examined the different forms of those republics which, having been originally formed with the seeds of their own dissolution, now no longer exist, and we have viewed modern states all around Europe, but find none of their constitutions suitable in our circumstances.

“In this situation of this assembly, groping, as it were, in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understandings?

“I have lived, sir, a long time; and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. And, if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings, that ‘except

the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe that, without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel; we shall be divided by our little, partial, local interests, our project will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a by-word down to future ages. And, what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing government by human wisdom, and leave it to chance, war, conquest.

"I therefore beg leave to move that hereafter prayers, imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service."

At once a new spirit began to be manifested and progress was made in framing and adopting the Constitution which Gladstone said was "the greatest piece of work ever struck off by the brain and purpose of man."

Its simplicity and strength were attested by President Cleveland in the following statement:

"How could a man like me, a man without great learning or much experience go into the White House for the first time and get along at all? Well, I'll tell you. The Constitution is so simple and so strong that all a man has to do is to obey it and do his best and he gets along."

History abounds with such examples of God's sovereign hand in national and international affairs, working

out His purposes for the vindication of His truth and the coming of His kingdom in the earth.

When we turn to the study of His providence in the lives of men as individuals, we learn how often the essentials of the story of Job have been re-enacted, showing that the author of the book was not guessing when he wrote it.

“Man’s life,” says Matthew Henry, “is no more governed by the Stoic’s blind fate than by the Epicurean’s blind fortune.” Can this be true of every life, however obscure and unnoticed of men? Is the Almighty so intent on the sweep of great movements that the units which compose them are unnoticed or unaccounted for? Do the circles of His power exclude as mere useless fragments any lives within the range of His eye?

Much is said about *law* and *laws* which operate with pitiless exactions. There is no comfort or assurance there, we are told. We answer, What are laws but the reins with which the God of wisdom and love drives His chariot? It is something to know they are in His hands.

Speaking of the movements of the spheres, a Christian astronomer said: “There are no closed circles in nature. The planetary orbits that may seem so, are really open spirals ever advancing with the onward sweep of the great star—systems round their remote and unknown sun.” And Tennyson speaks of

“The one far-off divine event  
To which the whole creation moves.”

Can we think for a moment that in this movement we are a negligible quantity? that we are not in the warp and woof of His purpose?

Years ago, when that great thinker, Joseph Cook, was delivering in Boston the Monday lectures that made him famous, he wrote a hymn which was sung in Tremont Temple on the occasion of the 220th lecture, and is here given as a splendid paraphrase of the teaching of Scripture:

“Before He formed a star,  
Our God arranged our lot;  
Our little lives were planned afar,  
When we as yet were not.

Time hath no aimless strands,  
God warp and woof combines;  
Life’s loom is in His holy hands,  
His shuttles know their lines.

He loved us when as yet  
We had not seen the sun;  
God’s forethought is man’s coronet,  
And love by love is won.

He purposed all He sends,  
He knows what us awaits;  
He marketh now the distant ends  
Of paths to hidden gates.

All acts His eyes foresee  
And never choice constrain;  
So willeth He that we are free  
His grace to lose or gain.

His love hath filled the past,  
An ocean without shore;  
Our purchased souls Him first and last,  
Love, trust, obey, adore.”

May the last two lines of the hymn be consciously true of all who read it. Surely we are in His plan! Let us be sure that we are in His will. Then may we confidently accept His own challenge to prayer: "Call unto Me and I will answer thee and will show thee great things and difficult which thou knowest not" (Jer. 33:3-Rev. Ver.)

The Missionary Review of the World reported the following incident concerning a Danish missionary, at home on a furlough, who was invited to preach at a missionary gathering in Jutland. So many came that the meeting, which was to be in a large barn, was held outside. Clouds threatened an immediate downpour, and the missionary thus prayed: "Dear Father, Thou seest that many of us are gathered here to learn about the things of Thy kingdom. Grant us fair weather so long as the meeting shall last." Two ministers present were surprised at the directness of the prayer. One said: "He speaks too boldly. I would not pray that way to God." "No," the other replied; "I would not dare to pray that way, *but perhaps this man knows God better.*"

Just so! Those who "know God better," dare to pray for "great things and difficult." As not a drop of rain fell during that service, the listeners were deeply impressed by this example of bold faith and divine interposition. Ruskin has truly remarked "that the reason that preaching is commonly so ineffective is that it calls on men oftener to work for God than to behold God working for them." While this was said in reference to "the effort of man to earn rather than to receive his salvation," as "the root of almost

every schism and heresy" of the Christian Church, it applies equally well to prayer and providence.

Many instances of God's sovereignty over Nature and men could be given. In answer to prayer He has preserved certain fields from blight that struck everywhere around them. He has guided in search of food those who were ready to perish. He has delivered from peril, in remarkable ways, those who were on His mission. When Stanley's expedition in search for Livingstone was nearly annihilated for want of food, he with about a dozen others left the camp "on a desperate and final quest for food." Nine days passed with no success. Feeling that they must all perish unless help came from God, he besought the Lord not to let those poor people perish. He says: "All night I prayed and when the morning light glinted through the trees I called to the men to begin to march. I felt sure we should find food that day. Before we had gone half a mile we saw stretching out before us a small grove of ripe bananas. We were not following any track. I was steering by the compass, and if we had gone 500 yards to the right or left we should likely have missed this beautiful sight. At once we began to pull them and roast them, and having eaten a good meal, we got 150 loads of ripe bananas, with about sixty pounds to the load, and the expedition was saved."

Evangelist Charles Ingles relates the following fact in the life of George Muller, founder of the Bristol orphanages:

"When I first went to America, thirty-one years ago, I crossed the Atlantic with the captain of a steamer who was one of the most devout men I ever knew; and

when we were off the banks of Newfoundland, he told me this story:

‘Ingles, the last time I crossed here, five weeks ago, one of the most extraordinary things happened, and it has completely revolutionized the whole of my Christian life. Up to that time I was one of your ordinary Christians. We had a man of God on board, George Muller of Bristol. I had been on the bridge for twenty-two hours, and never left, when I was startled by some one tapping me on the shoulder. It was George Muller.

‘Captain,’ he said, ‘I have come to tell you that I must be in Quebec on Saturday afternoon.’ This was Wednesday. ‘It is impossible,’ I said.

‘Very well, if your ship can’t take me, God will find some other means of locomotion to take me. I have never broken an engagement for fifty-seven years.’

‘I would willingly help you. How can I? I am helpless.’

‘Let us go down to the chart-room and pray.’

‘I looked at the man of God and I thought to myself, what lunatic asylum could the man have come from? I never heard of such a thing.

‘Mr. Muller,’ I said, ‘do you know how dense the fog is?’

‘No,’ he replied, ‘my eye is not on the density of the fog, but on the living God who controls every circumstance of my life.’

He went down on his knees and prayed one of the most simple prayers. I muttered to myself, ‘That

would suit a children's class, where the children were not more than eight or nine years of age.' The burden of his prayer was something like this: 'O Lord, if it is consistent with Thy will, please remove this fog in five minutes. Thou knowest the engagement Thou madest for me in Quebec for Saturday. I believe it is Thy will.'

When he finished, I was going to pray, but he put his hand on my shoulder and told me not to pray. 'First you do not believe He will, and second I believe He has, and there is no need whatever for you to pray about it.'

I looked at him, and George Muller said this: "Captain, I have known my Lord for fifty-seven years, and there has never been a single day that I have failed to gain an audience with the King. Get up, Captain, and open the door and you will find the fog is gone.' I got up and the fog was gone!"

It may be added that the vessel arrived on time.

It is the changes of life that often cause bewilderment. And the one thing which so often makes the situation perplexing is the seeming inopportuneness of the change. Is there no solution? Are the transitions of life the happenings of chance? Could we look behind the scene, we might discover that what seems so mysterious is the visible manifestation of the highest law,—the personal will of the loving Father, who subordinates all earthly relations and things to our greatest and best good. The changes of earth are but the tokens of His sovereign pleasure; the concussion of events, the bursting of the flower of His Providence; the shock we feel, only the tremor of lines under His

gracious hand. Our very sorrows may be the projecting shadows of His ineffable light.

Change is the heritage of earth. Perpetuity resides in principle. As a state, it belongs to the invisible and eternal. This world is subject to change, because it is only a means to an end. The permanent lies beyond. Contrasted with that, the scenes of earth are but temporary shifts, designed to meet the demand of the present and fit us for the great future. In the same view we ourselves, on the earthward side, are evanescent as the clouds. It is related that Edmund Burke, once canvassing for parliament, had an engagement for a joint discussion with his opponent. The hour arrived. A vast concourse of people had assembled to hear issues discussed by these two men, one of them "the unsurpassed orator, scholar, and statesman of his time." Suddenly some one appeared with the startling news that Burke's opponent had just dropped dead. Whereupon the great man arose and exclaimed amid the most solemn hush, "What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!" and the assembly was dismissed. Viewed from the standpoint of this life only, did he not speak the truth? The sudden transitions of life taken by themselves would be impenetrably dark, and fraught with inconsolable anguish. But considered as the evolution under a loving guidance to an end as glorious as it is eternal, the darkness becomes fringed with light and the anguish is assuaged. We shall not understand the mystery, but we will feel that it betokens no harm. How often it is that an incident, whose harmless nature is well known to some, strikes terror into the hearts of others who have not this knowledge. Are

we sure that all our fears and anxieties are not equally groundless? that what we now grieve over, as an affliction too great to be borne is not, as understood by higher intelligences and those who now share their bliss, the very boon of heaven itself?

The best understood events of life bring dismay to those to whom they are as yet but mysteries. An eclipse of the sun, which we know to be in accordance with astronomical laws, and to recur with the exactest uniformity, was regarded during the Dark Ages as a portentous and alarming event, to avert the recurrence of which Christians offered formal prayers.

Such is still the estimation of this most natural phenomenon among the superstitious in savage countries. In some instances, the people blow horns and beat kettles and pans in order to frighten the monster from devouring the sun and to cause him to disgorge the god of day. Some time we shall find that scenes which occasion dread and sorrow are only a transition, as of the moon across the sun's disk, concealing the light for a moment by its shadow, but leaving the great luminary to shine on in splendor and beneficence. "And now men see not the light which is bright in the skies," said Elihu; "but the wind passeth and cleanseth them." Life's transitions, however sudden, are not chance drifts on the sea of time. They are freighted with living spirits and pervaded by the Presence that ensured safety to the storm-tossed crew on lake Galilee.

"So darkness in the pathway of man's life  
Is but the shadow of God's providence,  
By the great Sun of Wisdom cast thereon;  
And what is dark below is light in Heaven."

There are two aspects of the Divine sovereignty which call for special mention in the treatment of this vital doctrine—the *transcendence* and the *immanence* of God.

The former, though disparaged by the trend towards naturalism, is indispensable to any true conception of life. In art, culture and religion it is that which is above and beyond the common level of things that excites attention, creates aspiration, and draws to heights of attainment. Spiritual ideals are borne in upon us and become regnant through the operation of a power not of ourselves. This is the secret of a serene and overcoming life.

Under the caption of *The Dead Cathedral*, Leopoldo Lugones writing in "Inter-America" on the destruction of the Rheims Cathedral, wisely remarks: "No human congregation is possible as a spiritual state, except around a transcendent ideal. Anarchy supervenes where men are bereft of the concept of transcendence; for serenity is a spiritual state, not a physical satisfaction."

Now that ideal and that concept cannot be dissociated from the scriptural teaching concerning a Being who transcends Nature and all the laws and forces operating therein; who is not straitened by those laws and forces, but may, in His wisdom and love, supersede them by something higher for our good. This does not mean that they are suspended or nullified so that Nature ceases to be uniform; she goes on acting upon everything in her realm. But God breaks in upon that realm, lifts a subject from her control and subjects it to a higher, spiritual law, as He wills; just as the player, for the time being, takes a de-

scending ball from the control of gravity and with the stroke of his bat sends it whirling into space.

This is supernaturalism; this is the meaning of miracle. Surely the great God who created the universe and ordained its laws and set in motion its forces is superior to the work of His hands and can, when it suits His purpose, supplement, intensify, or displace it with resources held in reserve.

One of the best illustrations of miracles as something transcending the limitations of Nature was furnished by an observation of Dr. Everett, professor of theology at Harvard University. Being asked by a student, near the close of his lifework, if he believed in the miracles of the New Testament, he made this reply: "Believe in miracles? Why, gentlemen, once I did not believe them at all, but as the years come on it seems I want to believe in little else." And he went on to explain what a miracle meant to him, citing the case of a sea gull which had lighted on the deck of the ship on which he was crossing the Atlantic. The frightened bird tried to fly, but could not get the use of its wings sufficiently for its flight. Then a sailor lifted it up and instantly the great wings had the sweep of the air, and soaring away, it was soon out of sight. "As I saw that," said Dr. Everett, "there came to me the thought of the true place of the miracle in the Book of books."

Thus does the transcending God stoop to our condition and, lifting us out of the sin and misery that enthrall us, give the wings of the soul that sweep of the spiritual atmosphere for which they were created.

There are two poems which show the contrast too often seen between the boastful, self-reliant spirit of the natural man, but little removed from pagan conceit, and that joyful sense of victory through faith in the supernatural Helper. Here they are—one of them by a man who was no example of his own words, the other by one who magnified the sovereignty and grace of God.

### INVICTUS

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods there be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced or cried aloud,  
Under the bludgeonings of chance,  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate;  
I am the captain of my soul.

—W. E. Henley.

### INVINCIBLE

(A reply to *Invictus*)

Out of the night that covered me,  
Black as the Pit from Pole to pole,  
I thank Thee, Lord, for lifting me,  
Reborn—a living soul.

There are no storms of circumstance,  
But that, through Him, I shall endure,  
No more am I the pawn of chance,  
He holds me safe—secure.

And though this be an age of tears,  
Of shadows, mists, and shade—  
I find no menace in the years,  
In Him I'm unafraid.

What matters, then, how straight the gate?  
He safely guides me to the goal;  
He is the Arbiter of fate,  
He is the Captain of my soul.

—*G. R. Churchill, D. D. S.*

In placing due emphasis upon the fact of God's transcendence, we must not neglect the equally vital fact of His *immanence*. We may adopt the following lines as a thankful recognition of this fact:

“O not a cosmos, rigid, stern,  
Devoid of tender smile and nod!  
I know there is within it all  
A bleeding and a brooding God.”

It is told of a Copenhagen preacher that he said in a funeral discourse: “God cannot help us in our great sorrow, because He is so infinitely far away; we must therefore look to Jesus.” It is amazing that such a statement should have been made. It institutes in the minds of hearers a contrast between God and Jesus; whereas they are the same. Jesus is Immanuel—“God with us.” He said “I and my Father

are One." Our Sovereign is "the Father regnant." He not only transcends His creation, but He is also in the midst of it, guiding and controlling it in the interest of His creatures. He is the Power that makes for righteousness and floods us with the consciousness of His redemption. "All the mysteries of the world and of my existence in the world," says Schweitzer, "may ultimately be left on one side unsolved and insoluble. My life is completely and unmistakably determined by the mysterious experience of God revealing Himself within me as ethical Will and desiring to take hold of my life." And he expresses it in this wondrous simile: "There is an ocean—cold water without motion. In this ocean, however, is the Gulf Stream, hot water, flowing from the Equator towards the Pole. Inquire of all scientists how it is physically imaginable that a stream of hot water flows between the waters of the ocean, which, so to speak, form its banks, the moving within the motionless, the hot within the cold; no scientist can explain it. Similarly there is the God of love within the God of the forces of the universe—one with Him, and yet so totally different. We let ourselves be seized and carried away by that vital stream" (*Christianity and the Religions of the World*, p. 84).

We would not say "so totally different" without noting that both phenomena are essential to the life of the world. "Behold, then, the goodness and severity of God." Both are attributes of His character and manifestations of His reign.

"Love is and was my King and Lord,  
And will be, tho' as yet I keep

Within His court, on earth, and sleep  
Encompassed by His faithful guard,

And hear at times, a sentinel  
Who moves about from place to place  
And whispers to the worlds of space,  
In the deep night that all is well.

And all is well, tho' faith and form  
Be sunder'd in the night of fear;  
Well roars the storm to those that hear  
A deeper voice across the storm."

—Tennyson.

When Professor Tyndall gave his Belfast address before the British Association of Science, he ruled out everything beyond the material world. Years afterwards, to the question of a friend, "When you stood at the bounds of things material, what did you find?" he replied, "I stood before the Eternal." "Why, then, did you not say so in your Belfast address?" And he slowly answered, "It was a great mistake." Such is ever the sad confession when sober, good sense takes the place of atheistic speculation. God is not only above but within His material universe.

A touching incident vividly illustrates how the elements of transcendence and immanence are combined in the direction of affairs. A blind man tapped the pavement with his stick in New York, near the Pennsylvania Station, says the *Expositor*. Feeling about the curb at the busy crossing, he shouted confidently, "How about it, Charlie?" The traffic officer in the middle of the avenue, looked up, saw the blind man, held up his hand, blew his whistle, and called, "All right,

Ben." And the blind man crossed the street safely between the lines of traffic held up for him.

Now just as the authority of that officer availed through his presence in the place of danger, so that his transcendence over the traffic became effective in behalf of the blind man; so the transcendence of God avails because He is everywhere present to will and to do in the exercise of His unlimited authority and power. His providence can mean nothing less than that. How true the lines of the poet Lowell:

"Though the cause of evil prosper  
Yet 'tis truth alone is strong;  
Though her portion be the scaffold,  
And upon the throne be wrong;  
Yet that scaffold sways the future  
And behind the dim unknown  
Standeth God within the shadow  
Keeping watch above His own."

An interesting war story has come from Belgium where Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Norton are conducting a gospel mission, with wonderful results. Mrs. Norton being accorded an interview with the Queen, asked, before leaving, if she might be permitted to relate to her Majesty a true story of how one soldier, who fell later at Pervyse, found faith in God. This is the story, which had come to her direct from the chaplain to whom the soldier had related his experience:

"The soldier had received a Gospel at the Front. He read of God, but because he could not see Him he could not believe in His reality and in His omnipresence. But he longed to believe. One night at

the Yser, he was on sentry duty. Alone in the presence of danger, his thoughts turned again to God. If only he could believe!

“As he thought, he was aware of some one behind him. He knew some one was standing there, yet did not dare to turn his head to see. At last, ever so little, he did turn his head, and he saw *his King!* Yes, it was his King!—standing sentry duty with him—sharing in the every experience of his soldiers. For two hours behind him, motionless, stood his monarch, and in that interval, as he thought and prayed, came faith, faith in God through Christ. The presence of his King, silent yet so near, the marvel of the whole experience, had brought to him faith in the presence and personality of God.

“There were tears in the eyes of the Queen when I had finished. ‘I shall tell it to the King,’ she said softly.”

So our Heavenly King, in the midst of life’s warfare, though we be not conscious always of His presence, is near, facing the enemy, keeping watch with His own, the pledge of victory and peace.

Is there any truth whose proclamation is more needed by the Church and the world than this? Are not men misled by false prophets and “those at ease in Zion,” who are ignorant of the tremendous significance of the conflict now waging between “the god of this age” and the forces of righteousness? The climax of all history is approaching when the sovereignty of God will have its most fearful display in a world that has so long ignored His presence and authority. One of the religious leaders of Great Britain wrote to a

friend in America: "I think the weakness of the present day is that man is so prominent that God is obscured." And Y. Y. Tsu, secretary of the Chinese Students' Christian Association in North America, well said:

"The great spiritual contribution of Christianity to China, as Dr. Chamberlain said, is the acknowledgement of the sovereignty of God in the life of man. The greatest need of my people it seems to me is to recognize God in human destiny, to feel His power, in all life whether individual or corporate.

"What my country needs supremely is a *spiritual message*. Other benefits are sure to follow the righteousness of the Kingdom of Heaven, not to precede it." (Missionary Review of the World.)

#### QUESTIONS

1. What great truth is back of all mystery as well as the ultimate solution of the mighty problem that has engaged our attention in this book?
2. Mention some facts in history which show its causative relation to the affairs of this world, including the progress of Christianity and civilization.
3. Are individual lives excluded from its application?
4. Does it explain the uniformity of nature and the invariableness of law?
5. How then can prayer and miracle be accepted as reasonable and possible?
6. What two aspects of Divine Sovereignty are explained and illustrated?

## CHAPTER 10

### THE DIVINE ANSWER TO HUMAN BEWILDERMENT

Life is a strange alternation of laughter and tears. As in the order of creation language is a mark of man's distinction above all other creatures, so of him alone can it be said that he laughs and weeps. His first audible sign of entrance into the world is a cry, and though with dawning intelligence the infant face smiles its recognition of friends, and laughter breaks out in the spontaneity of youth, yet so many and varied are the counter currents within and without the soul, that, as the years go by, tears seem to be the most expressive phase of human experience.

Thoughtful people have spoken of this, sometimes as the deepest sense of their own experience, more often as the sequence of their observation and conviction. Juvenal explained the meaning of this fact in the beautiful words: "Nature confesses that she gave the tenderest of hearts to the human race when she gave them tears. This is the best part of our sensations." The great poet Petrarch said: "I see not what anything in the world can give me save tears." Charles Dickens, a master in the art of human portraiture, thus voiced his feeling: "Life seems to me the saddest dream that ever was dreamed." Thomas Huxley, a modern scientist, declared: "The evolution of the human race as disclosed on the pages of history is one of infinite sadness." Isabella Bird Bishop, the noted traveler, writes: "From the seaboard of Japan to those shady streams, by which the Jewish exiles wept when they remembered Zion, and from the icy plateaus of northern Asia down to the equator, I have seen nothing but sorrow,

sin and shame, of which we have not the remotest conception." Speaking of the tragic meaning of life, Dr. A. B. Davidson, a great Hebrew scholar, once asked a friend, "Do you ever, without any special reason for grief, fall into uncontrollable weeping?" And he added, "Just the other day I was alone; and there came such a sense of the mystery, the uncertainty, the loneliness, the pathos of life, that I was for a long time shaken by sobs, which I was unable to control" Truly spoke Joseph Roux: "Lofty mountains are full of springs; great hearts are full of tears."

The book of Job is the most adequate treatment and illustration of such aspects of life that the world's literature affords. Nothing that would open the fountain of tears seems wanting here. The sufferer had known brighter days, but now, under repeated blows of the adversary, his cup of misery seemed full, and mingled with his honest protests, as he drains the cup, is the cry: "My face is foul with weeping and on my eyelids is the shadow of death" (16:16). The cup was not his choice, and if he must die, the sin of suicide should not be one of its ingredients. Believing in God, he held fast to his integrity, "enduring as seeing Him who is invisible" and voicing the conviction whose import was to be more clearly discerned in the light of a personal revelation: "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding."

Wordly wisdom does not go that far. It says, What is the good of life in these circumstances? and understanding only what makes for present enjoyment, it suggests self-destruction as the way out of what is felt to be an intolerable situation.

Such was the feeling and the folly of the district Judge in the northwest who shot himself in his chambers in the Federal building, leaving a note which stated that his memory had failed him in the course of his work on the bench and that he feared his health was becoming seriously affected; and of that man who retired from business when he went blind, but unable to endure the prolonged strain of his isolation and failing health, stabbed himself after luncheon one day, expiring in the arms of his wife. "Things were looking too bad," he said, as he begged her to forgive him, "I couldn't face life."

Perplexed and bewildered, men of the world do not look high enough to see above their condition. Unlike Job, whose afflictions, when his integrity was questioned, seemed to gird him with invincible determination to endure, they succumb to trials which should be the occasion for the exercise of those reserved powers that only such means call forth. Despite his afflictions, Job's theistic belief remained unshaken and found its fittest opportunity. Theism is not always held with its logical implications. To the credit of this princely sufferer be it said, that his failure was not of this character.

This statement should not be understood as denying that Job's faith was free from defects. He is an example of all who, bewildered by the strange providences of life, wonder why they are so and even protest against them. A higher degree of faith, such as he had after the divine interview, would lead to quiet submission and expectation of future good.

These providences—the things that perplex and make men wonder and protest—may be summarized

as *strokes of misfortune, the problem of sin, and the silence of God* in the face of all.

Regarding the first, is there need of any supplement to the book of Job? There was stroke upon stroke, till it seemed there was nothing left which could make one suffer. "Host after host is against me"—Ch. 10:17. The very things which to a sensitive, appreciative soul combine to make life worth while, snatched away or despoiled by the destroyer—how inexplicable to reason and conscience! What is more natural than to grieve and lament in view of such a mystery? One of the sayings of that fine soul, Francis James Child, so beloved of friends and pupils in a long career as a university teacher, was this: "Ah, what a world—with roses, sunrise and sunset, Shakespeare, Beethoven, brooks, mountains, birds, maids, ballads—why can't it last, why can't everybody have a good share?" Speaking of a charm with which Nature endears objects of delight, "only to baulk them and me" he exclaims: "I cannot bear to witness the world's dealing with such perfection of beauty and nobleness. It is today quite too utterly crushing." (*Atlantic Monthly*, July 1925).

Others have felt the weight of these things, only to find relief in devotion to the ethical concerns of life.

Far more serious and perplexing than strokes of misfortune which affect our temporal existence and the happiness relative thereto, is the problem of moral evil or sin. "There is no problem of good," says Professor James. So thought Job, as long as things went well. But when reverses came, he could not reconcile this fact with his conception of the sovereignty and

goodness of God, which he felt should be arrayed in behalf of uprightness among men. He seems to indicate that his calamities are a reflection on God's character, reversing the Divine purpose to evaluate properly the upright man and counteracting his influence for good. From Elihu's inference in 35:3, which he drew from Job's reasoning, especially in chapters 9, 10, 16 and 21, we judge that Job had concluded there was no advantage in being righteous more than if he had sinned. Elihu suggested a point of view which had not occurred to Job,—that God's righteousness needs no supplement from man's as though the latter could obligate God to profit him in an earthly way.

But we now have to do with Job's bewilderment before a clearer understanding of the question came. Until then his trouble was that of every good man, who, conscious of his integrity, is unable to account for the disparity between his suffering and the immunity of the wicked. (21:7-9). If God is a righteous sovereign, why does He permit sin? And why does He make no distinction in this respect between the righteous and the wicked? "Wherefore," he asks, "is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul?" If this is to be the fate of the upright, why was life given to him? "What is my strength that I should hope? and what is mine end that I should prolong my life?" (note 6:10-13). He concludes that life is not worth while without the strength and wisdom to accomplish his purposes of usefulness (cf. 17:11). He declares that his afflictions are "without cause," and that he is "delivered to the ungodly and cast into the hands of the wicked" and "broken

asunder" . . . . "although there is no violence in mine hands and my prayer is pure" (9:17; 16:11-17). And yet, he says: "Even now, behold, my Witness is in heaven, and He that voucheth for me is on high" (16:19). So confident is he that the witness above corresponds to the witness in his own breast, that he is willing to stake everything upon this fact.

But oh—and here is to him the strangest anomaly, the greatest of all mysteries—*God remains silent*, delays to explain. If only He would speak! if only He would act! if only He would show His face! Anything but a *hidden God*! "Wherefore hidest Thou Thy face and holdest me for Thine enemy?" (13:24; cf. 10:2; 23:1-9; 24:1). "Behold, I cry for help but there is no judgment" (19:7; also 30:30 and 31:35). Unanswered prayer! No arrest of the course of wrong among men! Job had yet to learn "the patience of hope" for himself and that the patience of God was involved in the wisdom of His silence.

Job's cry of anguish has been repeated often down the passing years. Even those who would fain have believed for the best have been forced to exclaim against God's seeming indifference to "man's inhumanity to man." Referring to a conversation with Carlyle, Froude wrote: "I once said to him, not long before his death that I could only believe in a God that *did* something. With a cry of pain which I shall never forget, he said, 'He does nothing!'" Missionaries reported much depression and unbelief in the regions of the Adana massacres. Some said: "What's the use of buying and reading the Bible? Did not the Adana Christians read the Bible? Yet they perished and their Bibles with them." When the World-War

closed a Gospel Mission was established in Belgium and colporters went about trying to sell copies of the Scriptures. One gentleman was asked to buy a Testament for the reason that he was old and it was good for him to know that God loved him and wanted to give him peace of soul which takes away all fear for the future, for He is the God of peace." "God of peace!" he exclaimed bitterly. "It were better that he should let us live in peace! During the war we did not see Him as God of peace! He allowed my two sons to be shot by the Germans in His name. They told us that they were come in the name of God and on the buckles of their belts they wore the legend, 'For God and King,' *In the name of the God of the Bible they shot my innocent boys.*" And he wept. A woman to whom a colporter offered his books said, "No, no, monsieur. I no longer believe in God! You saw over there the monument erected to thirty martyrs who were shot in the flower of their age at that place. My son was one of them. *Why did not God arrest the hand of those bandits?*"

Such tragedies might lead one to apply the remark of Forel, concerning the cruelties and rapacities of the animal world, with even greater force, to what occurs in the human world: "The good God must have a great deal on His conscience."

Serious thinkers, especially in considering the darker side of life, to which their energies are summoned, wonder at God's delays, when the circumstances seem to call for a speedy vindication of His character. An instance of such a state of mind was cited by Hon. David Lloyd George in his address on Hugh Price Hughes, at the anniversary of the Mis-

sion founded by that distinguished clergyman and reformer. "I recollect," said Mr. George, "attending the funeral service in City Road and I remember what passed through my mind: 'There lies silent the greatest personal force my race has turned out for a generation.' He struggled against suffering with that divine impatience which belongs to every reformer. That was a great saying of his, walking along Hamstead Hill, 'Why is not God in more of a hurry?' There was no more reverent heart than Hugh Price Hughes, and that was a cry from the soul for the millions of suffering people."

But God will not—perhaps it would be better to say, cannot—hurry, with the countless factors of the problem involved, especially those of freedom and sin. He will not break His silence to explain what His wisdom has seen best to conceal, and He must therefore remain, as Amiel has said, "the Great Misunderstood"\*

One thing we must not forget, that this is not the time or place for explanations. We only know that God does not always choose to relieve where relief is sought. We might reflect that the place of trial is the place of privilege, into which we have been thrown as a test of loyalty and devotion, seeing also that in His wisdom we are needed there and may there accom-

---

\*Dan Crawford relates that a negro fellow traveler said to him, at the end of a fifteen-mile trek in the tall grass of central Africa, "You are angry." "Why do you say so?" "Because you are silent." "Tell me more about it." "In our language," explained the black man, "we say that if a man is silent he is angry. That is why we know God is angry, because he is silent." Mr. Crawford then read to the negro from the New Testament and told him that God had spoken good news in Jesus Christ but His messengers had been slow to tell it.

plish the purpose of the gifts and training His hand has bestowed. It becomes us therefore to abide uncomplainingly in His will and to make the best of every situation.

Edward L. White, in his lines on "genius," has pictured such a providential opportunity:

"He cried aloud to God: 'The men below  
Are happy, for I see them come and go.  
Parents and mates and friends, paired, clothed with love;  
They heed not, see not, need not me above.  
I am alone here. Grant me love and peace.  
Or, if not them, grant me at least release.'  
God answered him: 'I set you here on high  
Upon my beacon-tower, you know not why,  
Your soul-torch by the cruel gale is blown,  
As desperate as your aching heart is lone.  
You may not guess but that it shines in vain,  
Yet, till it is burned out, you must remain.'"

But the question will recur—what is the way out of the state of mind described above? What is the true attitude of the perplexed soul amid the unaccountable mysteries of life? Surely not that of "making the most of this world," as the expression is used by men of the world—men, who, whether their aim be business or pleasure, see not beyond the bounds of time and sense. That would be to reverse or defeat the intent of Divine Providence.

Nor is it a stoical attitude towards the impact of evil, whose modern phraseology is, "What cannot be cured must be endured"; or "grin and bear it." Such forced resignation never yet gave relief from pain nor opened the way for fruitful returns to the sufferer.

And there is no help in philosophy, whose voice does not reach the ear of misery. She speculates and guesses, when the soul calls for certainty. Will

Durant, author of "The Story of Philosophy" has an article on "The Failure of Philosophy" (Harper's Monthly, Dec. 1926) which closes with the words: "We are being destroyed by our knowledge, which has made us drunk with our power. And we shall not be saved without wisdom." But he thinks philosophy may yet perhaps show us the way to unity and peace. Even the "perhaps" cannot save the inconsistency of such statements. Philosophy had no wisdom to save that brilliant teacher and writer whose career was terminated by his own hand in an eastern city. The head of the department of philosophy in a great university, and the author of books on God and the infinite, he was without the wisdom of which Durant wrote. His philosophy had failed in the hour of ill health and despondency.

The best that philosophy can do is to confess her ignorance and say with Omar Khayyam:

"There was a door to which I found no key;  
There was a veil past which I could not see;  
Some little talk awhile of me and thee  
There was—and then no more of thee and me.

Then to the rolling Heav'n itself I cried,  
Asking 'What lamp had Destiny to guide,  
Her little children stumbling in the dark?  
And—a blind understanding!' Heav'n replied."

Job had something infinitely better than that. His friends had tradition; he had revelation undiluted by traditional bias—not the supposition of the Persian poet, whose imagination framed that reply. When Heaven speaks, it is not to mock its suppliants. The light it throws on destiny is not the *ignis fatuus* of philosophy. The wisdom that saves is not in the philosophies of earth. It comes from above and is coupled with a pure understanding.

So affirms Job who refers to man's ingenuity in mining for silver, gold, iron, brass and doing other wonderful things, and says:

"As for the earth, out of it cometh bread  
And underneath it is turned up as it were fire.

But where shall wisdom be found?  
And where is the place of understanding?  
Man knoweth not the price thereof  
Neither is it found in the land of the living.  
The deep saith, It is not in me;  
And the sea saith, It is not with me,  
It cannot be gotten for gold,  
Neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.

Whence then cometh wisdom?  
And where is the place of understanding?  
Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living  
And kept close from the fowls of the air.  
Destruction and Death say,  
We have heard the rumour thereof with our ears."

In other words, neither reason nor instinct nor whatever disclosures the natural man anticipates from death, can open the gate of wisdom to his soul. What, then? The Word of God alone that subjects all nature to His decree, has from the beginning revealed the secret.

"God understandeth the way thereof,  
And He knoweth the place thereof.  
For He looketh to the ends of the earth,  
And seeth under the whole heaven;  
To make a weight for the wind;  
Yea, He meteth out the waters by measure.  
When He made a decree for the rain,  
And a way for the lightning for the thunder:  
Then did He see it and declare it;  
He established it, yea, and searched it out.  
And unto man He said,  
*Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom:  
And to depart from evil is understanding.*"

And that is the Divine answer to human bewilderment. In it we perceive several indispensable things, if

we would make any headway against the winds and tides of life.

First, there must be a *willingness to forego the solution of mystery*. We are not in this world to solve mysteries but to do the will of God so far as that is made known. As Professor James declares, in his book, "The Will to Believe," one needs the conviction "that evil at large is none of your business until your business with your private and particular evils is liquidated and settled."

And Schweitzer makes the wise and helpful remark: "The highest knowledge is to know that we are surrounded by mystery. Neither knowledge nor hope for the future can be the pivot of our life or determine its direction. It is intended to be solely determined by our allowing ourselves to be gripped by the ethical God who reveals Himself in us and by our yielding our will to His." And he urges: "When you preach, you must lead men out of the desire to know everything to the knowledge of the one thing, that is needful, to the desire to be in God and thus no more to conform to the world, but to rise above all mysteries as those who are redeemed from the world." *Christianity and the Religions of the World*, pp. 86, 89.

Secondly, there must be *the courage of faith*. "There is no blackboard demonstration that God is good," says one; "you must risk it, or die a coward." To put it another way, it is the venture of faith that leads into light. The case of Lady Henry Somerset, as told by herself, is a good illustration of this truth. Worldly and skeptical, she was dissatisfied and longed for something better than her unbelief and wealth afforded her. Standing under a tree in her garden, her soul filled

with perplexity, she exclaimed, "If I only knew there is a God!" And a voice seemed to answer, "Do now what you would do then and you shall know." She began at once to act upon the suggestion; her skepticism vanished; the joy of unselfish service was hers; and she became the leader of the temperance reform across the sea.

"Yet lives the lesson of that day;  
And from its twilight cool and gray  
Comes up a low, sad whisper, 'Make  
The truth thine own, for truth's own sake.'

'Why wait to see in thy brief span  
Its perfect flower and fruit in man?  
No saintly touch can save; no balm  
Of healing hath the martyr's palm.'

'Midst soulless forms and false pretence  
Of spiritual pride and pampered sense  
A voice saith, What is that to thee?  
Be true thyself and follow Me!'

'Where now with pain thou treadest, trod  
The whitest of the saints of God!  
To show thee where their feet were set,  
The light which led them shineth yet.'

'The footprints of the life divine  
Which marked their path, remain in thine;  
And that great Life, transfused in theirs,  
Awaits thy faith, thy love, thy prayers.'"—Whittier.

Again, there must be the true accompaniment of that faith—*reverence*. Such is the implication of the passage in which Job defined wisdom. Pride and disregard for authority are its antipodes, closing the avenues of divine revelation. As the Psalmist declares: "The secret of the Lord is with them who fear Him, and He will make them to know His covenant." Says Karl Barth: "Dead is our personal life—were it even the noblest, finest, and most pious—when it does not have its beginning in the fear of God." *The Word of God and the Word of Man* P. 290.

"What a dark world—who knows? Ours to inhabit is!  
One touch, and what a strange glory might burst on us!  
What a hid universe! *Do we sport carelessly,  
Blindly, upon the verge of an apocalypse?*"

(Israel Zangwill).

Because of this reprehensible attitude men like Herbert Spencer are left in the fog of their agnosticism. He confesses that his personal judgment was always in defiance of authority, and his uncle teacher wrote his father concerning the obstinate defence of his unbelief: "The grand deficiency in Herbert's natural character is in the principle of fear. By fear I mean both 'the fear of the Lord' which 'is the beginning of wisdom,' and that fear of parents, tutors and others who may be over him." Spencer says that his "mode of thinking did not involve that concentrated effort which is commonly accompanied by wrinkling of the brows." This may account for his indifference to his father's appeals on the subject of religion. With all his brilliancy, he was never able to sound the deeper aspects of life. Contrast with Spencer's pride of opinion the saying of the great apostle whose thinking has left such an enduring effect upon the world: "Such is the confidence which we have through Christ in the presence of God; not that of ourselves we are competent to decide anything by our own reasoning, but our competency comes from God" (Weymouth).

Finally, there must be a *resolute obedience to the light we already have*. It is idle to think of some future attainment while neglecting present duties. It is useless to strive for an unknown experience that waits on devotion to ideals already known, and calling for exemplification. Paul charges Timothy to "give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" and to "take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; con-

tinue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." The apostle knew nothing of that tabu of doctrine so popular with superficial thinkers. Nor did Job who stressed the practice of sound doctrine in his day. Yet to fail where simple duty points the way is to render nugatory the best creed in the world, and destroy all hope of a wholesome experience. So did Buddha, whom misguided men compare to Christ, as the founder of a religion. For he forsook wife and child for asceticism and self-torture in the vain hope that he might attain assurance of redemption. And therefore, judged by a normal, healthful standard of right, he was not a safe guide for others. Cf. 1 Tim. 5:8.

The gist of the matter, to use an expression heard during the great War, is to "carry on"—to square deed with knowledge, to live up to the revealed will of God, and thus fulfill the aspiration so forcibly phrased in the prayer of John Drinkwater:

"Lord, not for light in darkness do we pray,  
Not that the veil be lifted from our eyes,  
Not that the slow ascension of our day  
Be otherwise!"

Not for a clearer vision of the things  
Whereof the fashioning shall make us great,  
Not for remission of the peril and stings  
Of time and fate!"

We do not crave the high perception swift  
When to refrain were well, and when fulfill,  
Nor yet the understanding strong to sift  
The good from ill.

Not these, for these thou hast revealed,  
Not these, we know the hemlock from the rose,  
The pure from stained, the noble from the base,  
The tranquil holy light of truth that glows  
On pity's face.

We know the paths wherein our feet should press,  
Across our hearts are written thy decrees.  
Yet now, O Lord, be merciful to bless  
With more than these!

Grant us the will to fashion as we feel,  
Grant us the strength to labor as we know,  
Grant us the purpose ribbed and edged with steel  
To strike the blow!

Knowledge we ask not,—knowledge thou hast lent,—  
But Lord, the will,—there lies our bitter need:  
Give us to build above the deep intent  
The deed, the deed!"

### *Questions*

1. How do men of distinction regard the sad aspects of this life?
2. Does worldly wisdom furnish any explanation or any relief for such things?
3. How may the providences of God that perplex and oppress the minds of men be summarized? And which do you think the most severe?
4. Mention some examples.
5. How must Amiel's impressive statement be taken? And how does the poet White interpret God's attitude toward man's complaint? Compare with Omar Khayyam.
6. What answer does Job give?
7. State the four indispensable things suggested by that answer.

## CHAPTER 11

### The Ministry of Pain

Of the different aspects of this many-sided book no one has greater appeal for those who suffer than that of the *ministry of pain*. So obtrusive is this thought that it is made by some the principal aim of the book. Certain it is that both on the divine and human sides of the subject reasons for such a ministry may be discerned which shoot rays of light into the darkness of its mystery. "The pencil of the Holy Ghost" said Bacon, "hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon."

Why such emphasis? May it not be that happiness is unable to accomplish the useful ends which divine wisdom has ordained for our place in the eternal plan? It goes without saying that sin entails misery; that the violation of any law of God will bring its retributive result; in a word, that he who does evil must suffer.

But this does not cover the whole ground. Much suffering in this world is due to no fault of the sufferer. Why should any one be afflicted on account of others? What purpose has pain in the economy of things? There is more than passing merit in the following remark of the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*: "Tragedy it has ever seemed to me, is not sorrow or misfortune, but that dullness and deadened imagination which loses all sense of past happiness and sees in present trouble only the fact and not the meaning."

Can we get at that meaning? After our utmost effort there will be a residuum of mystery which only the future life may clear away. Yet certain principles

make evident why suffering belongs to the present order of things. One of these is 'that the *government of the world is moral rather than material*. Whether God or man be considered the spiritual factor is supreme. Everything exists for that. It was to set forth this truth that the purpose of the book of Job was discussed in the first chapter. Another principle may be stated as *the logic of duration*. This life is too short to compass the ends of our being. The experiences of earth are not the makeshifts of a passing show but the determinatives of an eternal state. God hath set eternity in man's heart (Eccles. 3:11-Rev. Ver.). But the ultimates of that eternity depend upon what takes place in time. As the present life is a training school for an eternal future, it must involve things to which the natural heart is averse.

These considerations belong to the doctrine of a future life and need not here be dwelt upon. They are now mentioned to introduce some reflections on the divine agency in pain and the respects in which suffering is turned to a good account. That agency is distinctly recognized by Job. He said "the hand of God hath touched me", and he expressed the fact in a number of striking ways. Let him speak for all who suffer, even though they know not why, and let them think on reasons why God may be in their suffering. It may help them to endure, if it does not turn their mourning into joy.

First, then, *God seeks to realize on His investment*. Could anything be more reasonable? Who would put money into a building or a farm, with no expectation of a return? It is written, "Ye are God's tilled land, God's building" (1 Cor. 3:9 Gr.). It would be a strange

farmer who did not toil for a crop. And farming is a rough process sometimes. "Why", said Rutherford, "should I start at the plow of my Lord that maketh deep furrows on my soul? I know He is no idle husbandman. He purposeth a crop."

Consider the nature of this investment. To state it so the broad outline of the subject may make its application in detail as clear as possible, *God has invested in personalities*—beings capable of intelligent response to His will and of pleasing Him by their unselfish devotion to His interests. The only beings answering to such a description are angels and men. The former were in existence when the earth was formed and sang their choral of praise. Job 38:7. They were doubtless in the secret of the Creator's purpose to make the earth the habitation of a new being, to be created in the image of God, which would be a special reason for their shouts of joy.

When a leader, if not the highest, of the celestial host became Satan we are not told. He chose not to remain loyal to the Creator and aspiring to be "like the Most High" (Isa. 14:13-14) led away a vast number of that host. Isaiah refers to him as "day-star, son of the morning". Ezekiel, in a wonderful description of his brightness and preeminence, calls him "the anointed cherub", who was "in Eden the garden of God" and "upon the holy mountain of God", etc. (Eze. 28:13-15). But he fell and became the great Adversary of God and man.

Man, with his superb powers, was another opportunity of creative wisdom to enhance the glory of the universe; since, although the investment had special reference to the earth, it was not merely for the earth,

as the sphere of *temporary* returns. It involved the purpose of a cosmic kingdom and was on a scale commensurate with the infinite factors of such a kingdom. Both the Old and New Testaments speak of this kingdom, as in the foreknowledge and purpose of God and as the consummation of redeeming love.

It is significant that with man's creation came the command to have dominion in the earth, which implied that all creatures would recognize him as their rightful ruler and obey him without compulsion. But after the fall they seemed to sense his unfitness for such a relationship, and only by deception and violence has he been able to bring any of them into subjection.

When man had forfeited the right of dominion the plan of God began to unfold in a way that showed His will was not to be defeated. The Kingdom should yet be realized through a process that would put man back on the throne, as redeemed from his sin and spiritually fitted for dominion. It was to be done through a new Head of the race, known as the "Second Adam, the Lord from heaven" who recognized Himself as "the Son of Man", "the Son of God", and who declared that, as the fruit of His redeeming work, He would set up His Kingdom and all who became partakers of His nature should reign with Him forever. Hence we read that as the basis of all this, "*the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world*"; and, as the crowning event of all, His own final word of destiny to the righteous, "*Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*" This is proof that the mind of God was both creative and redemptive and that there was ready from the begin-

ning the resources of Grace to forestall any crisis and emergency that would imperil His investment. So it is that such passages as these are found: "Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself. That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, that we should be to the praise of His glory who first trusted in Christ." "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the extent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God. According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Now this glorious achievement, was to be the outcome of the selective principle,—through *individuals* then a *nation*; of whom, according to the flesh, the Messiah came to magnify law, fulfil prophecy, and establish the Kingdom,—*spiritually*, in men's hearts (Rom. 14:17; John 14:17, 23; Eph. 3:16-17; Col 3:15), *literally*, in the earth, (Psa. 2:6-8; 89:33-36; Luke 1:32-33; Acts 15:14-18; Rev. 12:10; 20:1-6); and finally to merge it in the cosmic whole (1 Cor. 15:23-28; Rev 22:5).

Thus is suggested the unutterable grandeur of that eternity in which God and man will hold fellowship—

God disclosing new possibilities for man in knowledge and service, man responding in adoration and praise and rising from one degree of progress to another in the endless sweep of his being.

Such is the investment God has made in those created in His image. How is it to be realized? By means of those attributes which have their highest manifestation in the Cross of Christ. They were first displayed in our creation; their climax came in our redemption. None will deny that God's wisdom and power were operative in creation. Was not His love included in that work? What could have been the motive back of creation? To exhibit skill in the production of something to be admired and known as proof of superiority? Intellect without heart would be the peril of the universe. The heart of God is no empty phrase. That we are endowed with an aesthetic nature makes it reasonable to think of God, who gave us the sense of beauty, as One who made beautiful things because He delights in the beautiful. But that is not all. Our nature is also ethical and capable of a deep appreciation of holiness and goodness. Infinitely more so is the Divine nature. We are created to love. We may admire and like things; but we can only love persons. And He in whose image we are made must have persons to love. His love, before creation, centered in the infinite Son, but He desired to create beings to whom this love might flow out — beings capable of returning that love and sharing in the glory thus shown. Hence the wonderful statement of Jesus Christ: "Father, that which Thou hast given me, I will that, where I am, they also may be with me, that they may behold my glory, which Thou hast given me: *for Thou lovedst me before the foundation*

*of the world.* O righteous Father, the world knew Thee not, but I knew Thee, and these knew that Thou didst send me; and I made known unto them thy name and will make it known; that the love wherewith Thou lovedst me may be in them and I in them" (John 17:24-26, Rev. Ver).

In view of such an exalted conception of man in creation and redemption, the reply of the Scotchman's child does not see so much out of place. He was teaching his children the catechism and asked the youngest, "What is the chief end of man?" The reply was, "to glorify God and enjoy Him forever." "Splendid!" said the father, who then ventured to ask, "Now, daughter, what is the chief end of God?" She thought a moment and said, "The chief end of God is to glorify man and enjoy him forever!"

God's tremendous concern that man, the crown of His creation, should be worthy of His love and fellowship, notwithstanding his fall into sin, was the reason for the incarnation and atonement of His Son. And the Book of Job is the anticipation of this glorious truth. As Professor Delitzsch says: "The real content of the Book of Job is the mystery of the Cross; the Cross of Golgotha is the solution of the enigma of every cross; and the Book of Job is a prophecy of this final solution."

Hence the ministry of pain in human life. All discipline, trial, and judicial dealing of the past have had their reason and meaning here. The most impressive instance, on a stupendous scale, was the suffering of Israel in exile; concerning which Edersheim in "The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah," vol. 1, p. 162, says: "It were a one-sided view to regard the Babylonish exile as only a punishment for Israel's sin. There

is in truth nothing in all God's dealings in history exclusively punitive. That were a merely negative element. But there is always a positive element also of actual progress; a step forward, even though in the taking of it something should have to be crushed. And this step forward was the development of the idea of the Kingdom of God in its relation to the world."

To make the application individual and specific, we are in the formative stage of life and destiny and must undergo experiences that are often exceedingly painful. If we would be what God wants us to be, we cannot avoid them. George MacDonald represents one of his characters, who complained of the hardness of her life as saying in anger, "Oh, I would to God I had never been made!" Her friend replied: "My dear child, you are not made yet; you are only being made, and you are quarreling with God's processes."

The story is told of a young man who had invested his all in a peach orchard which came into bloom and gave promise of a bounteous crop. Then came the frost which blasted his prospects. He quit going to church, and when his pastor asked the reason, he exclaimed: "I'm not coming any more. Do you think I can worship a God who loves me so little that He will let a frost kill all my peaches?" The minister looked at him a moment in silence and said: "Young man, God loves you better than He does your peaches. He knows that while peaches do better without frosts, it is impossible to grow the best men without frosts. His object is to grow men, not peaches."

Edwin Markham has put the thought in these lines:

"We all are blind until we see  
That, in the human plan,  
Nothing is worth the making, if  
It does not make the man.

"Why build these cities glorious  
If man unbuilded goes?  
In vain we build the world unless  
The builder also grows."

The ever-present tendency is to live below the divine ideal. Things of time and sense rule; dross accumulates until we are not current in the realm of holy influence. God is discredited and made unreal to the world. There is need of a force to detach us from what holds us in such conditions, to purify us from the dross of vain ideals, and to make us channels of sympathetic communication with those around. Only so will our lives count in the largest way for good. Ruskin says of Rubens: "Rubens was a great painter, but he lacked that last indefinable something which makes heart speak to heart. You admire but you never adore. No real sorrow ever entered his life."

Speaking of her sorrow in the death of one of her children, Harriet Beecher Stowe, once said: "I felt that I could never be consoled for it unless this crushing of my heart might enable me to work out some great good to others."

How this process of developing and intensifying the sympathetic element in human nature works may be seen through the lens of an actual experience as related by a minister, who says he had in one of his pastorates a lady of culture and respectability, whose baby was taken away by death. Friends came and tried to comfort her, but her crushed heart got no relief. She

could not even weep, until a rough Swede, employed by her, tapped at her door and asked if he could see the baby. She answered, "Oh yes, John, you may see the baby." So he went quietly up to the coffin and looked at the baby, while tears ran down his face. Then returning to the sitting room, he said to the mother, "I know just how it is, because I lost my baby." Then it was her heart melted, and she said afterwards: "There was just one person who helped me, and that was John."

Thus through loss came the gain of an experience that could sympathize with those in like case, and comfort and help.

"The tearless dry no tears; the whole in heart  
Bind up no broken spirits: 'tis not theirs  
To mix and minster the balm that heals.  
It is by sorrow that God trains His own  
And moulds them for the highest service here;  
Like Him who as the Man of Sorrows knew,  
To soothe the sad, to speak the words that cheer."

"When He hath tried me," cried Job, "I shall come forth as gold." He felt that somehow, in being in God's furnace of affliction, he would count for more in the sight of Heaven and earth than without such an experience. His life would have increased value for God, by whose permission he suffered, though at the time he could hardly believe that the agent of this suffering was Satan who sought to discredit God. The 'image and superscription' of the Most High would be stamped upon him and all men would profit by the exchange. So it is by discipline and pain that we are separated from dross and come to have greater currency in life and service.

The true values are formed and revealed by severe processes. The word *Character* meant originally an

instrument to cut, carve and mark, but afterwards came to signify the thing thus made. Not environment, circumstance, and opinion, but the character we become through grace and discipline is worth while. In a pottery establishment, a workman was seen by a visitor to beat a lump of clay with a large mallet. "Why do you do that?" was asked. The workman answered, "Wait a bit, Sir, and watch it." Soon the top of the lump began to heave and swell, bubbles formed, and the man said: "Now, sir, you see I could never shape the clay into a vase if these air bubbles were in it; therefore I gradually beat them out." So a thing of beauty and value was made, to grace some home and delight the inmates. We wonder why we are treated in certain ways. May not our gracious Lord be getting air bubbles out of us, so that we can be made beautiful for Him and inspiring to those whom He would lift above the sordid things of this world? Donatello the artist once said to the Paduans: "Here you praise everything I do; in Florence they criticize me. If I do not go back I shall become good for nothing." Criticism put him on the stretch to perfect himself in his profession. It should be so with all who are ambitious to excel.

Allied with this thought is that of *saving and enriching life*. "Sweet are the uses of adversity;" and this is one of the best. Lives go to waste for want of something that will cause them to renounce "the vain pomp and glory of the world", and seek to realize the counsel so aptly stated by Eliphaz: chap. 22:21-30. It is better to sail the seas of time laden with such blessings as there described, and enter the port of heaven with its Pilot at the wheel, than to sail at random with nothing in view but selfish attainments and become a wreck,

because that Pilot is not aboard. God will salvage what He can; but He seeks to save our lives as well as our souls and enrich them with the power of greater joy and usefulness. Elihu has given hints of what this means (35:10; 36:16). There may be the strait and there may be the "night". But sweet are the songs, and wondrous the place of enlargement and the table of fat things. Blessed is the touch of pain that awakens powers that might otherwise lie dormant, and develops to higher uses capacities that might else remain on a lower plane of exercise. Beethoven, we are told, bewailed his fate when deafness shut out melodies that entranced his soul. But his most exalted and beautiful compositions were written at this period. And Rubinstein exclaimed: "O deafness of Beethoven! what unspeakable sorrow for himself, and what unspeakable joy for art and for humanity!" Schubert, whose music so moves us with its charm and pathos, wrote: "Those of my compositions which have been inspired by pain seem to please people best."

It was this truth that led the eminent layman, Mr. Otto H. Kahn, as stated by the *Musical Courier*, to make the striking remarks he did in an address at a reception held in honor of George Gershwin the young American composer. Referring to him as "A leader of young America in music in the same sense in which Lindbergh is the leader of young America in Aviation," Mr. Kahn went on to say:

"Now, in that genius of young America, there is one note rather conspicuous by its absence. It is the note that sounds a legacy of sorrow, a note that springs from the deepest stirrings of the race."

Quoting the lines of Thomas Hardy—

“Where the new regions claim them free  
From that long drip of human tears  
Much peoples old in tragedy  
Have left upon the centuried years,”

Mr. Kahn continued: “The ‘long drip of human tears’, my dear George! They have great and strange and beautiful power, those human tears. They fertilize the deepest roots of art, and from them flowers spring of a loveliness and perfume that no other moisture can produce.

“I believe in you with full faith and admiration, in your personality, in your gifts, in your art, in your future, in your significance in the field of American music, and I wish you well with all my heart. And just because of that I could wish for you an experience—not too prolonged—of that driving storm and stress of the emotions, of that solitary wrestling with your own soul, of that aloofness, for a while, from the actions and distractions of the everyday world, which are the most effective ingredients for the deepening and mellowing and the complete development, energizing and revealment, of an artist’s inner being and spiritual powers.”

Thus it has been with all to whom the race has been indebted in the truest sense for help. Out of his loneliness and heartsickness came John Henry Newman’s immortal hymn, “Lead, Kindly Light”. When Dr. Moon, “at the height of his powers and acquisitions”, became totally blind, he was rebellious against God and cried: “What is all my education worth now when I am shut up here and the whole world shut out?” But he began to think that he might be enabled to help blind men read the Word of God. And so he invented

the Moon system of alphabet which has gone over the world, teaching millions of blind people to read the Bible and enlightening their darkness with the light of God. Mrs. Stanford has told how the Leland Stanford University and all their charities came into existence. She says: "I remember vividly his father's grief and mine when our son was dying. Mr. Stanford in his frenzy cried: 'If my boy is taken from me there is nothing for me to live for.' 'Do not say there is nothing for you to live for', said our boy. 'Live for humanity's sake—clothe the naked and feed the hungry.' That was the beginning. The corner stone to all our charities was laid by our son on his last day in southern Italy." And so they conceived the project of a university "to educate little men and women whose parents could not afford to do it and so fit them to become self-supporting." Other things followed, showing that the boy's death was not in vain.

All these examples of the ministry of pain prove what Harriet Martineau, the English authoress, said of her own case. Afflicted with deafness at a very early age, she felt deprivation almost unbearable. But in later life she felt it was the best thing for her, saying; "The best in a selfish view, as the grandest impulse to self-mastery; and the best in a higher view, as my most peculiar opportunity of helping others." Thus she and others in similar situations realized the force of Longfellow's saying—

"Know how sublime a thing it is  
To suffer and be strong."

Wisdom, like praise, is often heard from the lips of children, and nothing wiser was ever spoken than the reply of a little pupil of a music teacher who urged her to play the pieces again, adding, "the longer you

practice them the stronger your hands will grow so that after awhile you will not feel it at all." The child turned weariedly to the teacher and said, "Miss Graham, it seems as if everything that strengthens, hurts".

And this, after all, is the best part of education,—developing a force of character and a practical grasp of affairs that no mere school advantages can supply. When a certain man, with little school training was summoned to a service of great importance, he appeared before the dignitaries having the matter in charge. His knowledge was of a kind not gained by college curricula, yet seemed indispensable under the circumstances. Being asked by one of the dignitaries what university he had attended, he replied without hesitation, "I went through the University of Adversity." All were impressed by the rugged simplicity of the man as well as by his conscious mastery of what was expected of him.

We need to realize that if life is to possess the richest elements of growth, it must include the processes of hardship and discipline. We are like trees that root deep and expand by every wind that blows. We grow strong by our contention with difficulties. We are rooted deep by our pains. We come to appreciate the higher values of life. Lotz has said: "Faith is the feeling that is appreciative of value." And this faculty finds its noblest exercise in the midst of things that would detach us from God, whose providences we cannot understand, but whose estimate of values is voiced by the ministry of pain.

As in New England waste land is burnt over, to ensure a better crop of blueberries, so in our lives the

stunted overgrowth from selfishness and sin is done away by the fires of affliction, that the fruitage of character may be finer and more abundant. And so we come to know the meaning of that experience which formed the goal of the Apostle's supreme aspiration: "That I may win Christ and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by means I might attain unto *the out-resurrection which is from among the dead*" (literal translation).

The apostle was thinking of that union in glory with his Lord which would follow the First Resurrection and which could come only to those whose faith and perseverance bring to such an end the sufferings of the present life.

"Pain", said Hallam, "is the deepest thing we have in our nature and union through pain has always seemed more real and holy than any other." And who would question the language of Professor James regarding the utility of a world in which man's development proceeds from struggle and suffering? "Will not every one," he asks, "instantly declare a world fitted only for fair-weather human beings susceptible of every passive enjoyment, but without independence, courage, or fortitude, to be from a moral point of view incommensurably inferior to a world framed to elicit from the man every form of triumphant endurance and conquering moral energy?" (*The Will to Believe*, p. 101—chap. on *The Sentiment of Rationality*)

As expressed in the lines,

"It may be, if life held for me  
Position, wealth, and never pain,  
Its glamour would forge fetters that  
Would bind me captive to the plain."

God would prevent a calamity greater than the pain that makes one long for Him and the freedom He gives. Not to know Him is the real tragedy of so many lives. He is the sum of all true values, and His dealing with us, providential and gracious, has for its end such a realization on our part of the meaning of His investment in us that its income shall redound to His Glory and our eternal felicity.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What explanations are offered for the ministry of pain?
2. What great principle is first discussed as a reason why God permits and uses suffering in the economy of this world and how is it enforced by Job and other Scriptures?
3. Give some striking illustrations from the lives of people.
4. State the second principle involved in this discussion on the ministry of pain and illustrate.

## CHAPTER 12

### A LESSON IN SANTIFICATION

Incidental to the main scope and purpose of the book of Job, as previously stated, are many spiritual and practical truths of great value to the tried and perplexed believer. One of these is the teaching concerning sanctification.

Indeed, a key-thought of the book might be found in the contrast between the self-assertiveness of Job under trial and his humiliation and self-depreciation under the white light of the Divine intervention. If we should call it *the death of self*, we would be describing that process of sanctification by which Job came to realize his true measure and to find in self-renunciation the heart of the faith he had maintained with such strenuous insistence.

But was not Job a fully sanctified man before his trials, and were not these trials a proof of the fact? The conclusion of the narrative does not warrant this opinion. True, it was said of him that there was "none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil." This perfection, however, as all the facts show, was relative and is such as must characterize, in an important sense, every stage of a genuine religious experience. He was perfect as compared with the views of those who asserted that he was wicked. God condemned them as not having spoken the right thing as Job had—that his affliction was not a punishment for sin. He was perfect in the motives that animated him, in the sincerity and constancy of his worship, and in his observance of the practical forms of righteousness. All this

we gather from numerous statements in the book, and I apprehend this was the meaning of the Lord's question to the adversary and of Job's own insistence upon his integrity. But he was not perfect as to his deeper nature and his need of quiet submission to God's providences. In the center of his being there was a lack of something which enables a man to suffer meekly what may come upon him, to act without distraction, and to endure without complaint. The derivation of the word suffering from the Latin, *sub-fero* (*to bear under a thing*) point as one has said, to the way the burden is carried rather than to the pain or stress caused by it.

How did Job meet his trials? He had been sincere in worship, earnest in duty, but he was restive under a strain. He had the *Martha* energy without the *Mary* spirit—the zeal without the devotion. The former would serve the Lord; it seeks to please Him by its ministry, but knows not the secret of doing so. The latter *loves His will*, and waits to know His mind; then it rises to deeds of unexampled self-sacrifice.

I believe this to be *the very heart of sanctification*. One can see Job was not in this state when voicing his bitter complaints and expostulating with the Almighty concerning the treatment he was receiving. He confesses that his words had been rash (6:3R.V.). The suffering man was a strange paradox. In the midst of his vehement expostulations, he reiterates his faith in God and his hope of a vindication. But his attitude, after brooding over his trouble, was that of resistance rather than submission to the will of God.

Thomas C. Upham in his work, "Principles of the Interior or Hidden Life", well says: "There is but

one ultimate object at which, as those who wish to know the heights and depths of religion, we can safely aim; viz., God Himself; or what may be considered as essentially the same thing, a sympathy of our whole being with the holy will of God."

And even when it cannot be seen how some things can be God's will the right spirit accepts them as such, and quietly commits them to His sovereign dispensation. There is no disposition to complain of unjust treatment, to pity one's self as a much-abused innocent. Self-pity is proof of the lack of unquestioning confidence in the wisdom and goodness of God. Of Alfred de Musset, Aulard observes: "It is not sorrow that he chants, but his own sorrow."

A young man at the threshold of a promising career was stricken down with tuberculosis. Compelled to leave his work he spent eight months in the Adirondacks where he partially recovered. A friend meeting him one day in the city, asked, "What did you learn up there in the mountains?" He answered, "I learned one great lesson: I freed myself from self-pity."

Now this is perhaps the hardest of all lessons to learn, and it is the one seldom or never learned until the soul is brought into some extremity where it hears in the midst of its confusion and strife the Voice of the Lord saying: "Be still and know that I am God."

Then we do not chant our own sorrows; but a spirit of compassion for a sorrowing world takes the place of self-pity and we think of how we can be helpful to others.

We can picture the troubled depth of the Baptist's mind when in loneliness and perplexity, under the

power of the offended ruler he had rebuked, he sends out the despairing cry, "Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?" Had he not been the most honored of men in heralding the Messiah's advent? Had not multitudes thronged upon his ministry, which was so signally justified by the early works of that Messiah? And now he was left to languish in prison, with no hint of interposition from the One he had proclaimed as Israel's hope. Could he, after all, have been mistaken? It was John's *de profundis* wherein the witness he had received from heaven and his own testimony—"He must increase but I must decrease"—were lost in the mists that had settled over his soul. He never supposed his "decrease" meant the dungeon and martyrdom.

What answer does Jesus make to the cry of His faithful forerunner? There is no promise of earthly deliverance, but only an assurance that John's prophetic ministry was correct and the implication that his faith must not give way under the circumstances. The only answer of Jesus was the very one Job received,—a glorious manifestation of His beneficent power and the declaration that the news of salvation was being preached, with a blessing upon those who should not be offended in Him.

Strange answer? Not at all; the only one that could be made by One whose kingdom is not of this world, who came to suffer, saying, "If any one would be my servant, let him follow me." It is easy not to be offended when everything goes well. But "blessed is he who will not be offended" in his Lord, when "bonds and imprisonments" befall him. To say, as did Jeremiah, when everything had gone to pieces around him,

“It is good both to hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord,” is to realize the meaning of abidance in His holy will.

Job had said, “I was not quiet.” Elihu came back with the secret of victory in the words, “When He giveth quietness who then can make trouble?” This secret Job did not have as a justified man. He did not take his misfortunes with good grace. Elihu, who seems to have gotten at the root of the matter, did not say that Job was wicked, but that he talked “like wicked men” and had not laid his affliction to heart (34:36, R.V.; 36:21). The note of self-justification runs throughout the debate with the friends. “For He breaketh me with a tempest and multiplieth my wounds without cause.” “Why do ye persecute me as God and are not satisfied with my flesh?” “I will maintain my ways before Him.” “I will fill my mouth with arguments.” These are not the words of one whose mind is at rest because he has learned to take the will of God without questioning its wisdom or its justice. Evidently the deep of Job’s nature had never been sounded by the plummet of prosperity. And though, when the storm broke upon him, he could say, “Shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?” yet further reflection awakened in him the disposition to argue against the justice of his trial.

By what principle, then, could the term “perfect” be used to describe his character? Observe the order of the words in that statement: “A perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil.” The qualifying clauses of a sentence fix its meaning. Here the last clause shows that Job was perfect in his attitude towards God and upright in his attitude to-

wards evil. The former concerns the inner, the latter the outer life. With this agrees his own description of *wisdom* and *understanding*, in closing the debate with the friends. He feared God and kept himself unspotted from the world, things that every man in the initial stages of the Christian life will do. The fear of God made him just to his fellow-men, and walking uprightly made him a force for righteousness among them. These things constituted the integrity which the utmost effort of his accusers failed to shake. Throughout his prolonged suffering, with the most passionate protestations he maintains this integrity and does not give way to wilful sin. The sincerity of his intentions, the righteousness of his motives, and the beneficence of his life were attested by the Lord Himself in the final adjustment. It is a strange sort of interpretation that refers these elements of piety only to the fully sanctified life. They belong to every life, at whatever state of experience, that God approves as true to its light. There were not many in Job's time that thus measured up. Indeed, there was "none like him in the earth", and there are too few like him now. But this is the Scriptural type of a justified man, and its demands are none the less exacting because there are so few to meet them.

Now Job moved on this level, ignorant of his deeper need, until the shock of adversity became the occasion for a revelation that first humbled and then exalted him. He rose, when he went down. Some one has said that "santification consists in a series of generous beginnings"; which reminds us of what Emerson said of nature: "Nature hates calculators; her methods are saltatory and impulsive." This is hard on *evolution*, which I take it, is no more true in religion than

in nature. Grace is revolutionary and starts men on higher levels by "a series of generous beginnings". It was a great day for Job when he learned there was another standard of valuation in religion. The speech of God made him seem very small in his own eyes. It is the vision of His holiness that causes men to cry, "Woe is me!" and to wait in utter self-abandonment for the coal of fire. Recognition of the need precedes the attitude that conditions the gracious enlargement. Painful the humbling may be, but blessed is the result. And there is no other way to the higher altitudes of life and service.

"Oh, long and dark the stairs I trod,  
With stumbling feet to find my God,

Gaining a foothold bit by bit,  
Then slipping back and losing it;

Never progressing, striving still,  
With weakening grasp and fainting will,

Bleeding to climb to God, while He  
Serenely smiled, unnoting me.

Then came a certain time when I  
Loosened my hold and fell thereby;

Down to the lowest step my fall,  
As if I had not climbed at all.

And while I lay despairing there,  
I heard a footfall on the stair,

In the same path where I, dismayed,  
Faltered and fell and lay afraid.

And lo! when hope had ceased to be,  
My God came down the stairs to me."

**QUESTIONS**

1. What important key-thought is presented in this chapter?
2. In what sense may it be said Job was a perfect and an upright man and yet what did he lack?
3. How did Job evince this lack?
4. What example is shown in the New Testament and how does Jesus deal with it?
5. What remark of Emerson may well illustrate the process of Sanctification, and may the Christian believer, like Job, rise to higher altitudes of life and service?

## CHAPTER 13

### IMMORTALITY

The creed of materialism may be stated thus: Life is nothing but organized matter. Death is physical dissolution, and is eternal. This makes matter the sum of all existence, so that the history of life and death—past, present, and future—is but the history of matter. Such teaching has no room for the terms spirit and immortality. It stands opposed to whatever asserts the separability of mind from matter, that puts God in the universe, and clothes man with a responsible existence.

Left alone, it refutes itself, becoming tangled and choked in the meshes of its own absurdity. It has no way to account for the largest and most interesting phenomena of the universe. Facts big with meaning evermore obtrude themselves before us, which it will not notice, because it has no principle or method by which to explain them. Its refuge is dark, icy agnosticism.

The question of our immortality is one of profound interest. "If a man die shall he live again?" has been the question of the ages. It has beaten like surges of the sea, in the night-time, against the cold, deaf ear of human wisdom, while storm-tossed and wearied men have listened with throbbing hearts for the answer of peace. Its echo has come back to them, as if to mock their ignorance and make them despair. But, mingled with this echo, faint sounds of cheer have sometimes been heard, and dim signs of promise been caught, in trembling gleams of light through rifts of the storm, causing them to hope for the coming day. The night

of doubt and dread passed away, and there came the hush of peace, when the Sun of righteousness arose upon the earth with healing in His wings.

Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light in His gospel. He rescued it from the shadows of doubt, made it clear to the understanding of men. They groped darkly after it before his coming. They may have caught occasional glimpses of it, but they could not possibly attain a perfect conception of its glorious reality. Their reaches after it were but venturesome guesses. As on a dark night, flashes of lightning may reveal the probable existence of some object of search, whose certain existence and complete bearings the uninterrupted light of day makes known, so, the truth of man's immortality, which he could only guess at from occasional gleams of light in the night of his wanderings from God, stood out in perfect distinctness, radiant with beauty and grandeur, when "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ" streamed upon it. The fact was there before, but the assurance was wanting. Men thought it must be so, and so their guesses found place in the highest form of Pagan thought. And although these guesses were not the truth possessed, yet were they a kind of pre-emption of the same, until the full title of humanity to its hopes could be secured.

Nobody despises a guess, if that is the best a man can do. The traveller who gets along as well as he can by starlight, will not speak disparagingly of that when he finds his way better by the sun. So, seeing light in God's light, and having a true view of eternal things, we will not affect to despise the lesser proofs of those things which lie outside of special revelation.

Reason, through natural proofs, may apprehend, though feebly, that which a further step would make the fruition of faith. Then it is seen that these two powers are one in their end. Rightly understood, they will be found always to confirm each other. Even those mysteries, which must be excepted in this statement, will doubtless appear in the greater light of eternity, to be the perfection of reason, as the Author of reason, himself infinite in mystery, is perfect.

The fact that there is a future life, where knowledge shall be perfected is one upon which reason unmistakably sets its seal. Proofs of this truth aside from revelation may not be decisive, but they are very strong. To those whose thinking may be influenced more by revelation than they are aware of, such proofs seem convincing. They are certainly too cogent to justify any one treating the subject as mysterious and affecting to be indifferent to the momentous facts which its truth implies.

Before these proofs are discussed, it may be well to advert to the opinion of certain writers, that with Job, as with the Hebrews generally, the future offered no comforting hope, that neither the doctrine of a resurrection nor of future rewards and punishments is taught therein; in short, that the present order is the only moral government for mankind—all of which is declared to be true of the entire Old Testament.

In Chapters 3, 4 and 5 some notice was taken of Job's faith in a future state in which the inequalities and injustices of the present life would be corrected. (See comments on Job XIV, XVII, XIX, XXI and XXVII). The argument that since Job no longer hoped for such correction in the present, he had

nothing to look forward to but an empty future, with no prospect of alleviation of present ills or redress of wrongs and injuries done in this life, and that he contemplated the future with dismay and horror, discredits the teaching of the book concerning the righteous character of God who would not thus despise the work of His hands and permit the collapse of His moral government. A Being who would be thought of as doing this could not gain the confidence and devotion of men, nor hold their allegiance, despite the ills He permits to come upon them. Disinterested piety involves faith in the moral perfection of God and could exist only with the feeling that somehow the imperfection of the present order shall be righted in a future state.

Moreover, the main contention of the book is against the traditional doctrine of the friends, which the writers mentioned reaffirm as the teaching not only of Job but also of the entire Old Testament, that the present world is the only sphere of compensation for loyalty to God and vindication of character. Job had gotten away from that position and looked to a future world for what he no longer expected here. When he said, "Thou destroyest the hope of man," he meant, in keeping with other statements in the context (Chap. XIV), *for the present world*. The expression in that chapter "till the heavens be no more," could only signify, as stated in 10:21 and 16:22, that he is going "whence he shall not return" to the scenes and experiences of earth. Job's conception of the unseen state was not as clear as the New Testament reveals it, but it nevertheless indicated his belief that the dead were alive there and waiting for their change of fortune. He declares that man is "sent away" where he knows

not nor perceives what is taking place on earth but that "his flesh upon him hath pain and his soul within him mourneth." This shows that the departed are somewhere and that corporeity attaches in some way to their experience, unless the reference to the flesh can be taken as a transference in thought, of bodily pain to the spirit, "as if partaking of it."

Another rendering is made by Buttenweiser who says the Hebrew for flesh (*basar*) may be put for *kin*, in accordance with usage (Gen. 37:27; Isa. 58:7) and that *soul* (*nefesh*) should be *servant*, in this passage, as in Gen. 12:5 and 36:6, which would round out the thought of verse 21. That is, "when a man dies, he ceases to be;" he has neither knowledge of those still living, nor pain or grief himself. So this expositor translates verse 22—

*Only his kin grieve after him,  
And his servants mourn for him.*

This rendering avoids the difficulty mentioned as to *corporeity* and is preferable to the old translation. But it does not justify the explanation that the dead man has wholly ceased to be.

The teaching of Job concerning a state or place in which the dead live until their resurrection to a glorified condition, is the implication of many passages in the Old Testament. Enoch "walked with God and was not, for God took him." Abraham and the saints of that and a subsequent age, "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims, desiring a better country, that is an heavenly;" not accepting exemption from martyrdom "that they might obtain a better resurrection." Jacob said he would "go down to the grave (Heb.

*Sheol*) to his son mourning," and when he died he "was gathered unto his people." David's saying at the death of his child explains these expressions: "I shall go to him but he shall not return to me." He plainly refers to a resurrection when, contrasting his future with that of men "whose portion is in this life" and who dying "leave their substance to their babes," he says: "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." (Psa. 17:14-15). The New Testament does not surpass this. Note 1 John 3:2. Isaiah declares "the earth shall cast forth her dead" (26:19), and Daniel predicts a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust (12:2). Job's confident assertion that his Redeemer would stand at the last upon the earth (dust) and that he would see Him on his side, and not as a stranger, anticipated not only all subsequent Old Testament passages touching this truth, but also our Lord's interpretation of them. Note especially Psalm 16:10, which He must have had in mind when He foretold His own resurrection, where *Sheol* (mistranslated *hell* in the old version) of the Hebrew is the same as *Hades* of the New Testament Greek—the unseen world between death and the resurrection. In His clash with the Sadducees who denied the resurrection, he spoke of the glorious state of the resurrected saints and told those skeptics that they erred, "not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God;" and He pointed them to Moses for proof of the fact denied. "Now that the dead are raised even Moses showed at the Bush when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. For He is not a God of the dead but of the living; for all live unto Him." Though reckoned as dead, they were alive; for God had said so.

Thus did Christ evince a deeper penetration into the Old Testament writings than His contemporaries, and their modern imitators who do not accept His statements concerning those writings. All three divisions of the Old Testament, He declared, bore witness to the great verities of His atoning work and His bodily resurrection, and we are no more justified in rejecting the one than we are the other (Luke 24:25-27, 44-47).

Although Job lived long before the doctrine of a future life emerged from the shadows of pre-Christian times, he had the spirit of prophecy which re-inforced his reason and gave to his affirmations the emphasis we feel. He felt, as every one must feel, in his better moments, that there must be a future in which conditions that here break off purposes of good, shall be succeeded by those that enable the soul to attain the highest possibilities of effort. Can it be doubted that he knew, in part at least, what we so firmly believe, the truth of man's immortality?

That the soul, as a spiritual entity, survives the loss of the body, may be inferred from such facts as *self-consciousness* which witnesses to the same person through all the years, *telepathy*, *rational action under trance conditions or in sleep*, *the restoration of memory*, and other phenomena, when the sense medium of communication with the external world is quiescent and incapable of acting. The cessation of corporeal functions no more disproves the soul's existence and continuation as a separate entity than the wreck of a telegraph instrument proves the extinction of the operator. Longfellow's lines on the death of a slave picture well this aspect of the subject:

"He did not feel the driver's whip,  
Nor the burning heat of day;  
For Death had illumined the land of sleep,  
And his lifeless body lay  
A worn-out fetter that the soul  
Had broken and thrown away."

Napoleon once said to a skeptical physician, in a tone of contempt, "You physicians will not believe in the existence of the soul because you cannot find it with the scalpel." Surely the negation and abuse of reason were never worse displayed than in such an attitude. When Jesus would convince His disciples of the reality of His physical resurrection, He said: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." And so He emphasized the existence of the spirit as plainly as He did the body in which it lived; the one beyond the reach of the senses, the other, the object of their perception.

If the most powerful substances evidence their presence in the form of energy rather than otherwise, why should intelligent people stagger at the soul's existence and immortality?

*The law of the conservation of energy* confirms this thought. As expressed by Whittier:

"The waves which lull the body's rest  
The dust that pilgrim footsteps trod,  
Unwasted through each change attest  
The fixed economy of God.

Shall these poor elements outlive  
The mind whose Kingly will they wrought?  
Their gross unconsciousness survive  
The God-like energy of thought?"

The mode and application of energy may change, but the fact goes on forever. This alone gives man his opportunity for unlimited improvement and is the

guarantee of his own perpetuity. It lies at the basis of the unity of life which would be disrupted and reduced to meaningless fragments without this secret of continuity. The Divine Author of life has meant that every thing should fulfil the purpose of its existence. "He never made a splendid locomotive to ditch it before it had run a mile. He isn't so improvident as that."

It was such a conviction, awakened in his mind by the death of his father, that led to the conversion of a noted divine. He said: "I buried my materialism in the grave of my father." The extinction of such worth, he felt, was utterly inconsistent with a rational view of the universe, based upon ideas of unity, justice, and benevolence, and abhorrent to a nature capable of love and appreciation. In like manner the great Lincoln's sorrow over the death of his boy Willie prepared him to receive the comforting truth of a Paradise where Willie was alive and awaited the heart-broken father. The experience made Christ a reality to him and changed his views in relation to spiritual things.

In line with this idea is the argument from the *nature and design of growth*. Everything tends to perfection. Trees and other forms of life reach maturity and serve the useful end of that maturity, if not thwarted by extraneous means. A missionary to Labrador took a grape vine there and planted it. But owing to shortness of the season it never blossomed or bore grapes. When he returned for his Sabbatical year, he brought back the stunted vine and re-planted it on a sunny slope. It bore fruit; thus evincing that its mission needed only the proper climate to accomplish the end for which it was created. Cf. Job's statement in Chap. 14 first cycle, p. 51, e.-52 of this volume.

The life of man on earth, under conditions here existing, cannot expand to the full measure of its capacity for usefulness. It is often cut short when it promises most. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton's poem on André Chénier—*Farewell to the Beautiful Within*—has this prefatory note:

“André Chénier, the original of whatever is truest to native and genuine passion in the modern poetry of France, died at the guillotine July 27, 1794. In ascending the scaffold he cried, ‘To die so young! And there was something here!’ he added, striking his forehead, not in fear of death, but the despair of genius.”

Similarly Madame Rolland on the scaffold, regretted she could not write down the peculiar thoughts that arose within her in those last moments. And Herder said, “Everything now appears to me so clear that I regret not being able to communicate it.”

It is doubtful if a more luminous description was ever given of man's capacity for immortality and the reach of his personality for such a destiny than Victor Hugo's. He wrote:

“I feel in myself the future life. I am like a forest which has been more than once cut down. The new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. I am rising, I know, toward the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds. You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of bodily powers. Why then is my soul the more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head and eternal Spring is in my heart. Then I breathe, at this hour, the fragrance of the lilacs, the violets, and the

roses as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvelous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history. For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose, verse, history, philosophy, dreams, romance, tradition, satire, ode, song—I have tried all. But I feel that I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say, like so many others, "I have finished my day's work;" but I can not say, "I have finished my life." My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes in the twilight to open with the dawn. I improve every hour because I love this world as my fatherland. My work is only a beginning. My monument is hardly above its foundation. I would be glad to see it mounting and mounting forever. The thirst for the infinite proves infinity."

One of the outstanding proofs of a future life is that which arises out of the *moral law*. Every one is conscious of the sense of obligation. The formula, "I ought," or, "I ought not," testifies to a principle which allies man with the source of moral perfection. He cannot perform an act without pre-supposing that perfection, in which all acts of his would be perfect, a state attainable only in the infinite life. Therefore the moral law predicates immortality. Even the atheist will be found saying, "I ought," and "I ought not," though he may not pause to reflect upon the deep implication of his words. It is the utterance of the truth within him, revealing the existence of a moral nature, to which it stands related and indebted, and for whose fulfilment eternal duration is demanded.

"I ought" indicates that there is a person to whom the obligation is due. That person can be no other than the Supreme Source of right, otherwise there would be no moral significance in the motive-power, "ought"; it would be divested of all but the idea of expediency. Obligation rests upon the moral idea alone. And we cannot conceive of that apart from a Supreme Being, as unto whom every moral act is done. To illustrate: "I ought" to be kind. Why? If you say because people are kind to me, you take away the moral value of the act. For I would be simply paying for value received. The inference would be that if they were not kind to me, I would not be so to them. Or, if I were told to be kind to them, in order that they may be so to me, the selfish expediency of the action would be still more apparent. But if you should bid me be kind because it is right, and failing to be so, I would be guilty of wrong, you place my action on the ground of appeal to an ultimate source of right and obligation; then you own that there is a Being whose approval or disapproval gives an act its moral meaning. If this be true, there must be a time when that meaning shall be manifest; in which I shall account for the obligation to the Being to whom it is due.

Now the existence of religion goes back to this feeling, which led mankind to place its confidence and hope in a Power superior to Nature—a Power which was rational and capable of helping those who sought by sacrifice and prayer its interposition. Underneath that hope and confidence was the conscious need, engendered by moral law and pointing to a future reckoning.

The reaction of man's nature to the deep, underlying sense of dependence upon the Supreme Being and the

desire to avert His displeasure is the greatest restraining force in the world. The endeavor to find some other way to shape the conduct of men has given utterance to some of the most bizarre notions in literature. John Morley, for example, wrote in his biography of Rousseau: "Would not men be more likely to have a deeper love for those about them and a keener dread of filling a house with aching hearts, if they courageously realized from the beginning of their days that we have none of this perfect companionable bliss to promise ourselves in other worlds, that the black and horrible grave is indeed the end of our communion, and that we know one another no more?"

A writer, in a leading magazine, recently attempted to show that in the training of children there was a better way than inculcating the idea of law and commanding what should and should not be done. Instead of law and reproof, the child should be told that an action was not "nice," not good manners, and more on that line!

The trouble with all such superficial makeshifts is that they do not go to the moral springs of human nature; they never reveal the fact of authority, and hence set up expedience and the good opinion of people as the standard of action. The deep, abiding motives of life cannot be awakened in that way. Far safer is the practice of impressing the mind with the old truth that a future reckoning awaits those who ignore or violate the precepts of morality and the ethics of humanity. Such secondary motives as those referred to will never make people reverence law, authority, and the behests of conscience. William E. Dodd, professor of American history, speaking at a

conference on the prevention of crime, said: "There has been no greater deterrent of crime throughout the ages than the deep-seated belief in heaven and in hell." As to a future life, Darwin said: "The conclusion that I always come to after thinking of such questions is that they are beyond the human intellect; and the less one thinks on them the better." His incompetency to deal with the real problems of life was glaringly manifest. Gamaliel Bradford makes on Darwin's statement the incisive remark: "What at least stands out is that Darwin does not greatly concern himself with the enormous dislocation of life in this world which is likely to follow the loss of belief in another."

Renan, the skeptic, had a better point of view. He said: "The day in which belief in an after-life vanishes from the earth will witness a terrific moral and spiritual decadence. There is no lever capable of raising a people if once they have lost faith in the immortality of the soul." And Emerson declared, "A moral paralysis then creeps over us."

How this viewpoint affects the policy even of sceptics, where their own interests are concerned, may be seen by the following incident: When D'Alembert and Condorcet were airing their unbelief at Voltaire's supper table, he sent his servants out of the room, explaining to his infidel friends: "As I do not wish to be robbed and murdered to-night by my servants, I am anxious that the idea of God and a future state shall not be eradicated from their minds."

Any system of thought that does not include this element of motivity is fatally defective. As Professor William James says: "The first practical requisite which a philosophic conception must satisfy is that it

must, in a general way at least, banish uncertainty from the future."

One more argument will be noticed,—that from the *consciousness or instinct of immortality and the longing for it, common to all nations*. What was said of Columbus concerning his adventure, is true of all men in this respect; "The instinct of an unknown continent burned in him." Schoolcraft said that during the long period of his residence among the Mexican Indians he never saw or heard of an individual that did not believe in immortality. "No small part of their entire mythology and the belief that sustains man in his vicissitudes arise from the anticipation of enjoyment in a future life, after the soul has left the body." Lord Bolingbroke, himself an unbeliever, made this admission; "Before we have any light into antiquity these things begin to be taught; and when we begin to have any we find it established that it was strongly inculcated from time immemorial and as early as the most ancient and learned nations appear to us."

All their reasoning upon the subject was joined with their instinct of its truth. What they found existing in the deepest springs of the soul, they set about to establish by reason. The masses of men were not able to follow the reasoning of philosophers, but they could feel what their own souls said to them.

The soul loves life and yearns for its continuance. Whatever may be said of the *horror vacui* of nature, it is certain that the mind recoils from the idea of non-entity with a revulsion beyond the power of language to express. Huxley wrote to John Morley in 1883, when he was nearly sixty years of age: "It is a curious thought that I find my dislike to the thought of extinc-

tion increasing as I get older. It flashes across me at all sorts of times with horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no more than I did in 1800. I had rather be in hell a good deal. I wonder if you are plagued in this way."

Reason affirms that this inextinguishable desire must be a divine implantation. For God does nothing without a purpose. Its existence indicates the reality longed-for. Any other view would subvert the whole divine economy. It is scarcely conceivable, as Dr. Dick affirms, "in consistency with the Divine perfections that an error on a subject of so vast importance to mankind, should obtain the universal belief of all nations and ages, and that God Himself should suffer a world of rational beings, throughout every generation, to be carried away by a delusion and to be tantalized by a hope, which has no foundation in nature, and which is contrary to His moral government."

What reason so forcibly asserts is singularly credited by a passage in Ecclesiastes 3:11, where the word "world" should be, strictly, "Eternity": "He hath set Eternity in their hearts."

As the murmuring shell tells of its home in the sea, so do the inner voices of the soul betray its heavenly origin and prophesy its immortality.

There is a beautiful story of an old Norse king sitting in his hall one stormy night, before a fire, surrounded by his counsellors. Suddenly a little bird flew in, passed over their heads, and out at an open window. "Such," exclaimed the king, "is the life of man: out of darkness into light, and then lost in the darkness and storm again!" "Yes, your majesty," cried a courtier, "but the bird has its nest beyond!"

So, may we hold, whatever the mystery of its coming and going, the soul has its nest beyond. And this truth will make the humblest life seem worth while.

From this array of evidence it would seem clear that the denial of the doctrine of a future life would belie man's nature and entail a burden upon human hearts too grievous to be borne. The best of this life is attainable only by acting on the conviction of the truth of that doctrine. To doubt our immortality is to introduce chaos in our thinking and take away more than half the inspiration to worthy conduct.

But while the proofs offered in support of the doctrine are strong enough to lead men to live with a solemn reference to the future, they are, it must be admitted, insufficient to preserve it from obscurity and even denial without the confirmatory testimony of the Divine Word. The doctrine became a dim and uncertain thing in the long wandering of mankind from God. Even those philosophers who reasoned so accurately on the subject, at times distrusted their reasoning and were racked with doubt. And where they doubted the mass of men groped amid shadows too dense for the inward light to penetrate. And we may repeat, in emphasizing the contrast between then and now, the language of Sir Thomas Browne: "Happy are they which live not in that disadvantage of time, when men could say little for futurity but from reason, whereby the noblest minds fell often upon doubtful deaths and melancholy dissolutions."\*

Yes, happy are they to whom the good news has come and who need not to ask, as an old man in Korea asked

---

\**Religio Medici*—on "Urn Burial"—p. 159.

of a missionary: "Do you say there is a future world where we are going after we die? Who has told you?" For they have "the word of prophecy made more sure," whereunto taking heed, "as unto a lamp shining in a dark place," they realize the day has dawned and the day-star has risen in their hearts (2 Pet. 1:19). And they come at last to know the truth so quaintly expressed by the negro who was nursing his master. Being asked, "How is your master?" he replied: "He is dying full of life."

Such is death to believers in Jesus Christ, the Mediator whom Job longed to have appear. Instead of having "departed," as we say, they have, as Dan Crawford reports the African saying, "arrived." They have arrived at the goal of their faith and hope—the presence of Him whose immortal utterance has thrilled millions of souls: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

#### QUESTIONS

1. Does the book of Job prove the doctrine of a future life?
2. What reasons can be advanced outside of revelation in favor of the doctrine?
3. Which, if comparison be allowed, would you regard as the most convincing of these?
4. State your reasons.

## APPENDIX

(To page 117)

In a volume entitled "The Education of Henry Adams", an autobiography, there is an account of his interviews with Darwin. His struggles over Darwinism ended as the following conclusions indicate:

"Ponder over it as he might, Adams could see nothing in the theory of Sir Charles but pure inference, precisely like the inference of Paley, that, if one found a watch, one inferred a maker. He could detect no more evolution in life since the *Pteraspis* than he could detect it in architecture since the Abbey. All he could prove was change. Coal-power alone asserted evolution—of power—and only by violence could be forced to assert selection of type.

"All this seemed trivial to the true Darwinian and to Sir Charles it was mere defect in the geological record. Sir Charles labored only to heap up the evidences of evolution; to circulate them till the mass became irresistible. With that purpose, Adams gladly studied and tried to help Sir Charles, but behind the lesson of the day he was conscious that, in geology as in theology, he could prove only Evolution that did not evolve; Uniformity that was not uniform, and Selection that did not select. . . . He at least took his education as a Darwinian in good faith. The Church was gone, and Duty was dim, but Will should take its place, founded deeply in interest and law. This was the result of five or six years in England, a result so

British as to be almost the equivalent of an Oxford degree." Pp. 230-232.

The result of such effort to harmonize reason and revelation is no better with many people than it was with Henry Adams. The Church is gone and Duty is dim. Only Will is left, and that is no longer set on spiritual realities.

## APPENDIX II.

In Browning's poem on "Saul" the ideas emphasized by the author in chapters on "The Immemorial Cry," "The Sovereignty of God," and Elihu's Solution of the Mediatorial question in his interposition, are most impressively combined in the following extract:

"Tis thou, God, that givest, 'tis I who receive:  
In the first is the last, in thy will is my power to  
believe.  
All's one gift: thou canst grant it moreover, as  
prompt to my prayer  
As I breathe out this breath, as I open these arms to  
the air.  
From thy will stream the worlds, life and nature, thy  
dread Sabaoth:  
*I will?* — the mere atoms despise me! Why am I not  
loth  
To look that, even that in the face too? Why is it I  
dare  
Think but lightly of such impuissance? What stops  
my despair?  
This: — 'tis not what man Does which exalts him,  
but what man Would do! . . . . .  
.... . . . . . Oh, speak through me now!  
Would I suffer for him that I love? So wouldst thou  
so wilt thou!  
So shall crown thee the topmost, ineffablest, utter-  
most crown —  
And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor leave up nor  
down  
One spot for the creature to stand in! It is by no  
breath,

Turn of eye, wave of hand, that salvation joins issue  
with death!

As thy Love is discovered almighty, almighty be  
proved

Thy power, that exists with and for it, of being Be-  
loved!

He who did most, shall bear most; the strongest shall  
stand the most weak.

'Tis the weakness in strength, that I cry for! my flesh,  
that I seek

In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall  
be

A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like  
to me,

Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever; a Hand like  
this hand

Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee!  
See the Christ stand!"











**Date Due**

0 23 39

F 14 '44

NO 8 - '50

DEB 1 '06





BS1415 .8.W94  
The Book of Job; a Biblical masterpiece

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00117 0192